

PUBLISHING AND BOOKSELLING

By the same Author

THE YOUTH OF HENRY VIII

THE GIRLHOOD OF QUEEN ELIZABETH

ELIZABETH AND MARY STUART: THE BEGINNING OF THE FEUD

THE FALL OF MARY STUART

GEORGE III AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

LETTERS OF LITERARY MEN: VOL. I, SIR THOMAS MORE TO BURNS:

VOL. II, NINETEENTH CENTURY

THE ROMANCE OF BOOKSELLING

THE HOUSE OF ROUTLEDGE, 1834-1934. With a History of
Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, and other Associated Firms

Editor and Joint Author of

THE GREAT WORLD WAR (1914-1918): A HISTORY, 9 VOLS.

PUBLISHING AND BOOKSELLING

A History from the
Earliest Times to the Present Day

BY

FRANK ARTHUR MUMBY



With a Bibliography
by

W. H. PEET

Revised by F.A.M.



JONATHAN CAPE
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DEDICATED
TO MY GRANDSON
ROBERT MUMBY ALLAN

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PREFACE

SO much has happened since the last edition of this work appeared that it not only needs drastic revision but also supplementary chapters to bring it up to date. A whole volume could be devoted to the war years of 1939-45 alone: and the story of the British book trade's part throughout that long ordeal is one of which it has reason to be proud. Here, however, it has been possible only to gather up the main threads while the happenings are still fresh in one's memory, and string them together as part of the larger history of the world of books through the ages. Gaps there must inevitably be in a narrative covering so vast a field, but it is hoped that the result will still be acceptable as a brief survey of a vital trade which has existed from time immemorial. Though much of the present book is new, the original preface may perhaps be allowed to stand, almost as it was written, many years ago:

'My reason for offering this work is that no one else has attempted to write an adequate history of English bookselling and publishing. Wherever I looked for information on the subject I was faced with regrets that so little had been done to explore this evaded field of research. "No great trade has an obscurer history", wrote Augustine Birrell in one of his essays. "It seems to lie choked in mountains of dust which it would be suicidal to disturb. Men have lived from time to time of literary skill—Dr. Johnson was one of them—who had knowledge, extensive and peculiar, of the traditions and practices of 'the trade', as it is proudly styled by its votaries; but nobody has ever thought it worth his while to make record of his knowledge, which perished with him, and is now irrecoverably lost." And I met the familiar saying of Carlyle—that "ten ordinary histories of kings and courtiers were well exchanged against the tenth part of one good History of Booksellers"—so many times that I was ashamed at last to face it again until I had done something to remove the reproach which seemed to lie hidden in his words.

'Curwen's *History of Booksellers*, issued in 1873, and long since out of print, is not, strictly speaking, a history at all, consisting mainly of a collection of articles on the leading publishers and

booksellers of his day. Much material lies scattered through Nichols's *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, and Charles Knight has made abundant use of this in his *Shadows of the Old Booksellers*, a work which, though pleasantly written, is not always trustworthy. W. Roberts's *Earlier History of English Book-selling* is most valuable for its records of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, to which it is chiefly devoted; but the source-book of supreme importance for the early history of the trade after the invention of printing is Professor Arber's great *Transcript of the Registers of the Stationers' Company*, privately printed in five volumes, and carrying the record down to the year 1640. I am glad to seize this opportunity of thanking Professor Arber for permitting me to quote so freely from his monumental work.¹ Of late years the scholarly researches of E. Gordon Duff, Henry R. Plomer, and other bibliographers have thrown a flood of light on the dim records of the trade during the two centuries which followed Caxton's day. My indebtedness to all these and other authorities has, I hope, been made sufficiently clear in the course of my narrative. Several extracts from Masson's *Life of Milton* are made by kind permission of Messrs. Macmillan. My thanks are also due to that distinguished American publisher, the late Dr. George Haven Putnam, for some valuable references in his *Authors and their Public in Ancient Times*, and other works.

'In my own book an attempt has been made to tell in outline the whole story of English bookselling—tracing its origin as far as possible in the days of ancient Rome; its struggle for existence through the Dark Ages; and its subsequent organisation and development through the centuries down to the present day. I am indebted to the proprietors of *The Times* for permission to reprint the histories of the Oxford and Cambridge University Presses which I contributed to the pages of *Literature* before the days of the *Times Literary Supplement*, and to incorporate several articles from both journals on various other aspects of the trade.'

Those who wish to probe deeper into this subject are referred to the comprehensive bibliography by the late W. H. Peet. This originally appeared in *Notes and Queries*, and was reprinted in the first edition of the present work by permission of the proprietors of that publication. It has since been amplified and brought up to

¹ Professor Arber died two years after this was written.

date, my chief regret in doing so being that Mr. Peet did not live to do this himself.

In the present edition I am indebted to the proprietors of *The Times* for the text of Sir Stanley Unwin's letter on the threatened Purchase Tax on books, now included by that writer's permission; as well as for the tribute to the late C. W. Chamberlain, contributed to that journal by Mr. H. V. Morton, to whom my thanks are also due. To the proprietors of *The Bookseller* I owe the detailed analysis of book production in this country in 1939-1944, showing the varying effects of the struggle on all branches of literature during the Six Years War; and the extract from the article contributed by "Petrel" to that journal, recording his first-hand impressions of the scene immediately after the devastating incendiary raid on the heart of London at the end of 1940.

A special word of thanks is due to Sir Stanley Unwin for timely suggestions; and to Mr. J. G. Wilson, of Bumpus's, for valuable assistance on the bookselling side. I would like also to acknowledge help from Mr. John Hadfield and Mr. Maurice Marston, of the National Book League; Mr. F. D. Sanders, Secretary of the Publishers' Association; and Sotheby & Co., as well as from Mr. Grahame K. Scott, of the Purley Public Library, for historical notes relating to early circulating libraries in Great Britain.

Coming to the illustrations I have to thank the Stationers' Company for the reproductions of its seal and arms; the Cambridge University Press for the illustration of a Roman bookshop, from J. W. Clark's *Care of Books*; the Oxford University Press for the reproduction of its arms; Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co., for the illustrations of their historic device and the sign of the Bible and Crown; Messrs. John Lane, for Edmund New's drawing of the Bodley Head in Vigo Street; and Messrs. Jonathan Cape, for the sketch of Thirty Bedford Square.

For most of the inside knowledge of the book trade in recent years I am indebted to a host of good friends among both booksellers and publishers. If I may be permitted a personal note, I would wish this edition to be accepted as my farewell salute to all those with whom it has been my pleasant lot to be associated throughout my journalistic and literary career.

FRANK A. MUMBY

CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE BOOK TRADE

THE secret of the philosopher's stone is not more difficult to discover than the name of the Father of the Book Trade. We should look for it in vain among the records of the baked clay tablets of Babylonia and Assyria, and other ancient writings. Though a well-worn phrase in Ecclesiastes tells of the endless making of many books in Biblical days there is no mention in the Scriptures of any bookseller or publisher by name. The legend that Barabbas was a publisher, erroneously attributed for many years to Lord Byron, has no more foundation in fact than 'Peter Pindar's' malignant epigram on the publishers' habit of drinking out of authors' skulls.

In groping among the annals of antiquity it is disconcerting to find that the first bookseller about whom there appears to be any definite information was an undertaker as well. The undertaker's claim, however, need not be taken too seriously. He was an Egyptian, and his bookselling was only carried on in connexion with his funerals, at which he had the disposal of copies of the *Book of the Dead*—a work which was not only bought by the mourners and preserved by them as a memorial, but placed with the body in the tomb, to serve as the soul's passport and guide in the after-life. Leaving this lugubrious quasi-bookseller and flitting through the ages which saw the rise and fall of other ancient civilisations, we find an extensive literature of every description, including novels, but no actual records of organised bookselling until we come to the classic days of the Greeks and Romans. Bookselling does not seem to have had any tangible existence as a trade in Greece until the fifth century B.C., and it did not grow to considerable dimensions until the reign of Alexander the Great, a century or so later. Authors sought no share in whatever profits it may have made. They would not insult their Muse by any sordid dealings with booksellers. Contemporary fame and perhaps the hope of posthumous glory were the only things that mattered to the authors of ancient Greece. Lucian, 'the last great master of Attic eloquence and Attic wit', as Macaulay calls him, does not give a flattering

picture, in his satire on *The Illiterate Bibliomaniac*, either of the Athenian booksellers of his day or of some of their wealthy patrons:

‘You think’, he writes, ‘that by purchasing a great number of fine books you may be taken for a good scholar. But, on the contrary, you will only make your ignorance the more conspicuous. Not only do you buy the books which are not the best, but you are easily persuaded by the first man who praises the book; so that the booksellers who know you sacrifice to Mercury are as lucky as if they had found a treasure, for they could never hope for a better opportunity of converting their vilest trash into solid cash. . . . Even supposing that you were just discerning enough to buy the manuscripts of such a dealer as Callinus, so much admired for their elegance, or the publications of an Atticus, so celebrated on account of their accuracy, of what good, my dear sir, is such a possession to you? You can no more appreciate their excellence than a blind lover the fine eyes and rosy cheeks of a charming mistress. You may have collected the works of Demosthenes, including one of the eight copies of Thucydides which he wrote with his own hand, or all the books which Sulla, when he made himself master of Athens, seized and sent to Italy; yet how could that avail you? If you made your bed on the best copies of the great authors, or were decked in manuscripts from head to foot, would you be less ignorant than you are? There is a proverb that says, “An ape is still an ape though adorned with jewels and gold.” . . . You men of wealth would have too many advantages over us poor scoundrels if you could buy in an instant, for a mere sum of money, all the store of learning which has taken us so long to collect. If that were so, no scholar would venture to contend in erudition with the booksellers, with the vast stores of learning in their possession; but, on closer inspection, you will find that these worthy persons are no less lacking in taste and discernment than yourself, though their days and nights as well are spent among books.’

This, it must be remembered, was written in the declining days of the book trade in Athens, long after the conquest of Greece by the Romans had shifted the home of culture and the centre of literary life to Alexandria. Here, undoubtedly, was developed an extensive system of book-production, by means of which the best editions were published of the collected literature of Greece, Rome, Egypt and India, based on the texts contained in the famous Alexandrian

Library. Details of the trade itself, however, are sadly lacking, and of the men directly connected with it not a name is now known. We are forced, therefore, to turn to Rome, which subsequently became the chief seat of the book trade, though the intellectual supremacy of the city of the Ptolemies was long maintained under the Romans. It was not until the second half of the first century A.D. that the centre of the publishing world passed to Rome itself, taking with it, according to Strabo, the groundwork of the system upon which the Alexandrian book trade had been built.

Once in the book market of ancient Rome we are on firmer ground; and there is much to remind us of the book world of to-day. We stand in the Argiletum, and the atmosphere of books is as strong as in Charing Cross Road to-day. The pillars outside the shops are covered with the titles of the works to be obtained within, and the whole place is evidently a favourite haunt of literary men. The authors and scholars are plainly distinguishable from the slaves who go about their masters' business. If we look inside the larger publishers' offices we shall find other slaves hard at work on a new edition of the latest book that has been lucky enough to hit the popular taste. The thing that surprises us most is the marvellous cheapness of the books—often no more than a few pence. The main reason for this—to drop the pleasant fiction of the present tense—was not so much that the Roman author did not receive his share of the profits as that the publisher was able to employ his own slaves on an economical system which is as obsolete to-day as the gladiatorial combats in the amphitheatre. Slave-labour, with all its drawbacks, made it possible for ancient Rome to manage remarkably well without the printing press. With his trained staff of readers and transcribers a publisher could turn out an edition of any work at very cheap rates and almost at a moment's notice. There was no initial expense of type-setting before a single copy could be produced; no ruinous extras in the shape of printer's corrections. The manuscript came from the author; the publisher handed it over to his slaves; and, if a book of modest dimensions, the complete edition could be ready, if necessary, within twenty-four hours. There was a beautiful simplicity about this system, which, in spite of its technical deficiencies—chiefly in the form of corrupt and badly written texts—must fill the breasts of some of our modern publishers with envy, when they think of their own complicated methods of production.

The slaves, it need scarcely be added, were specially trained and educated for their work. Martial, our most entertaining if not our most trustworthy guide through the book mart of ancient Rome, tells us at the beginning of his second book of *Epigrams* that the transcriber could copy the manuscript of that book in an hour, 'and his services not be confined to my trifles alone'; but as there are between five and six hundred lines in the book in question Martial's estimate need not be taken as strictly accurate. Even this system of editions 'while you wait', so to speak, with its obvious advantage of making it possible to cope at once with any demand, did not always save publishers from the evils of over-production. From Cicero's letters to Atticus, and other references, we gather that the Romans were not without some sort of 'Remainder Market'—the grave then, as now, of so many blighted hopes. The remainders of to-day suffer a less ignominious fate than that of a large proportion of the unsold copies in ancient Rome. There seems to have been no second-hand bookseller then to act the part of foster-father to them; or kindlier pulping machine to put an end to their misery at once. The more fortunate, apparently, were shipped to the provinces, but their common fate would seem to have been found in the fish-dealers' and other shops of the Roman tradespeople, there to be used for wrapping-up purposes. 'If Apollinaris condemn thee', writes Martial, in one of his addresses to his book,¹ 'thou mayest run forthwith to the fish-sellers, to have thy back scribbled upon by the boys'—evidently with the customer's address, and possibly the price.

How many classics were destroyed in this way, or perished in the household fires of Roman citizens, it is useless to speculate, but in all the rubbish that was sold as wastepaper there must have been not many precious fragments. The shape of the book in those days lent itself admirably to these base uses. The volume as we understand it did not come into vogue until about the fifth century A.D. In ancient Greece and Rome, as in Egypt, it took very much the form of the mounted maps of modern days. The rolls were made of papyrus or parchment, and were written on one side only. The size of the roll naturally depended on the length of the work. The editions varied, according to the estimate of Theodor Birt, from five hundred to one thousand copies. In one of his letters Pliny writes significantly of a book which Regulus had written on the loss of his

¹ Book iv. 86.

son—‘a whole book upon the life of a boy!’—and for causing as many as a thousand copies to be distributed throughout the Empire.¹

This publishing trade, like Rome itself, was far from being built in a day. It was only when the Romans became their own manufacturers, instead of sending to Alexandria for the books which were turned out wholesale there by trained staffs of copyists, that the publishing trade of Rome began to reign supreme. With the Augustan age, in the latter half of the first century B.C., we arrive at last at something like a clear conception of what that trade amounted to. It is here that we reach the days of Titus Pomponius Atticus, the prince of friends and booksellers. Atticus stands apart from and above all other publishers of ancient Rome. He was the first man to lift the craft above the ordinary ranks of commercialism, to lay the foundations of its most honourable traditions; and though by no means the first publisher on record, there is none more worthy of the foremost place in the Booksellers’ Roll of Honour. A scholar and author himself, he was Cicero’s literary adviser, as well as publisher; and being possessed of great private wealth, was able to conduct his publishing business with something of that liberality and public-spiritedness which prompted George Smith in the nineteenth century to spend a fortune on the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

Atticus, like George Smith, seems to have been a man of enterprise and marked business ability. ‘You have sold my discourse on Ligarius so well’, writes Cicero,² ‘that I shall entrust you with this duty for all my future works.’ Atticus evidently developed his publishing business on a large scale. He was not content to rely upon Alexandria for editions of the Greek classics; he had his own trained staff of slaves for copying, and *Attikians*, as his editions came to be known, were the hall-mark of excellence. According to Theodor Birt, Atticus in course of time opened retail branches not only in Rome, but in the provinces as well.

Some of the Roman emperors exercised a strict censorship over literary property. Augustus on assuming the office of high priest had the book-shops, as well as private houses, searched for books of spurious Sibylline prophecies, both Latin and Greek, and committed the whole collection, amounting to upwards of two thousand copies, to the flames. Much more brutal outrages both on authors and publishers were perpetrated by Domitian. On one occasion,

¹ *Epistles*, Book iv. 7.

² *Ad Att.*, xiii, 12.

according to Suetonius, Domitian not only put to death Hermogenes of Tarsus because of certain passages in his history to which the tyrant objected, but crucified also the copiers who had issued the work.

What money was to be made out of Horace's books evidently fell to his publishers, for in the *Ars Poetica* he suggests that while his works, which pass even across the sea, bring gold to the Sosii, he himself reaps only widespread fame. Horace makes several references to the bookseller brothers who issued his works from their shop in the neighbourhood of the Temples of Janus and Vertumnus. One of these (Epistle XX) is best translated in verse by Sir Theodore Martin, from which we may be permitted to quote the following lines:

I read the meaning of that wistful look
Towards Janus and Vertumnus, O my book!
Upon the Sosii's shelves you long to stand,
Rubbed smooth with pumice by their skilful hand.
You chafe at lock and modest seal; you groan
That you should only to a few be shown,
And sigh by all the public to be read,
You in far other notions trained and bred.
Well, go your way, whereso you please and when,
But, once set forth, you come not back again.
'Fool that I was! Why did I change my lot?'
You'll cry when wounded in some tender spot,
And out of fashion and of favour grown,
You're crumpled up, and into corners thrown.

.
You will be liked by Rome while in your bloom,
But soon as e'er the thumbing and the soil
Of vulgar hands shall your first freshness spoil,
You will be left to nibbling worms a prey,
Or sent as wrappers to lands far away.

We come down to Martial's day—sixty years or so after Horace's death—for another literary complaint, as well as a further illustration of the extensive circulations commanded by the popular Roman authors. 'It is not the idle people of the city only', writes

Martial, 'who delight in my muse; nor is it to listless ears alone that these verses are addressed; for my book is thumbed amid Getic frosts, near martial standards, by the stern centurion; and even Britain is said to sing my verses. Yet what do I gain by it? My purse knows nought of my fame.'¹ But his chief cause of complaint, he proceeds, is that when the gods gave to the earth a second Augustus (by which he means Domitian) 'they did not give thee, O Rome, a second Mæcenas.' Martial, like all the needy poets of his day, never ceased to think of the prizes that had fallen to the poets of a happier reign—the Sabian estate which Horace had received from Mæcenas, the 10,000,000 sesterces (about £80,000) which had fallen into Virgil's lap. But times had changed; the court and aristocracy had now little but praise to bestow on the poets dependent upon them; and Martial begged Domitian's assistance in vain. Authors, no longer rich enough, like Catallus and Lucretius, to employ their own slaves in copying their books for private circulation, were forced into the hands of the booksellers. They had to make their reputation before they could hope for imperial favours or wealthy patronage. Martial evidently thought that one of his booksellers at least made a handsome profit by his works, for he informs his reader² that 'this thin little book' (the *Xenia*) will cost him four sesterces (about eightpence), but if four be too much 'perhaps you may get it for two, and Trypho, the bookseller, will even then make a profit'.

Trypho is more favourably remembered as the bookseller to whom Quintilian dedicated the *Institutio Oratoria*, acknowledging that it was owing to his friendly importunity that his books were published, and begging him to see that they were issued as correctly as possible. Though Martial grumbled at the bookseller's profit, it was to his own interest to obtain for his writings as wide a circulation as possible. He did not hesitate even to write his own advertisements, for no one was less ashamed than Martial of the gentle art of puffing. 'That you may not be ignorant where I am to be bought', he writes,³ 'and wander in uncertainty over the town, let me guide you to where you may be sure of obtaining me. Seek Secundus, the freedman of the learned Lucensis, behind the Temple of Peace and the Forum of Pallas.' There was no imprint, it should be added, on Roman books, and such directions were by no means superfluous. Martial, like some of our modern authors, perhaps thought it worth

¹ Book XI. 3.² Book XIII. 3.³ Book II. 24.

while to set up a sort of rivalry among the publishers of his books, for he mentions yet another of them by name¹—one Quintus Pollius Valerianus, who had preserved the immature verses of the poet's youth, and also sold other trifles which he had himself forgotten. Possibly it was in order to prevent competition of this sort that the first Publishers' Association was formed; for Dr. Putnam records, on the authority of Theodor Birt, that such a society was founded at the beginning of the second century.² Little is known about it except that it was organised by the leading publishers of Rome 'for the better protection of their interests in literary property, and that each member bound himself not to interfere with the undertakings of his fellow members'.

Roman authors had other grievances besides those against their publishers and friends. It was not only from motives of vanity that they indulged in the public and private recitations which became one of the features of their social life. The recitations, in addition to affording them their best form of advertisement, lessened, though it by no means removed, the risk, which every Roman author ran, of some unscrupulous plagiarist taking a new book, and in the most barefaced manner reissuing it, or large portions of it, as his own original work.

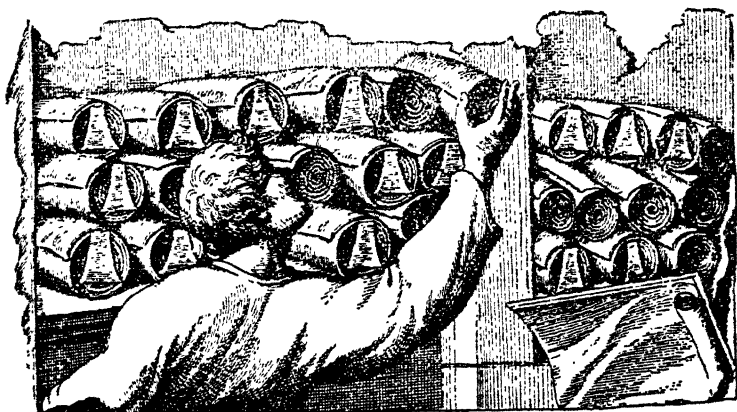
Even the public recitations were not without some dangers of the sort, for, like the public libraries of Rome—of which we are told there were between twenty and thirty—they were free to all citizens. It was by no means an unknown thing for some one among these audiences to commit a new piece to memory and, hurriedly issuing it through the bookseller, put his own name to it as author. This is not so improbable as it may seem when we remember what remarkable memories were possessed by the citizens of ancient Rome and Greece. Memory was then cultivated as a gift of the highest order, and some of the achievements in this direction would be incredible were they not corroborated by so many writers. Pliny tells us, in one of his letters, of a Greek philosopher who was able, at the close of a long extempore oration, to repeat it word for word from beginning to end. Cyrus is said to have remembered the name of every soldier in his army.

But we have strayed into the tempting byways of purely literary history, and must return to the booksellers, remembering that even in those remote days literature was distributed as far afield as

¹ Book I. 113.

² *Authors and Their Public in Ancient Times*, 1894.

the conquered land of Britain, with which our history henceforth is chiefly concerned. Roman literature, and with it the Roman book trade, rapidly declined after the Silver Age of Latinity, and when Constantine I, early in the fourth century, transferred the capital of the Roman Empire to Byzantium the age of classical Latin was practically over.



IN A ROMAN BOOKSHOP

Putting a roll back in its place. The ends of the rolls have tickets bearing the titles of the works.

CHAPTER 2

THROUGH THE DARK AGES

IT is no easy task to write an account of the restricted book trade in this country through the 'long night of the Dark Ages'. We find only faint traces here and there as we stumble through the centuries until we come to the system of distribution as it gradually developed in the days of the monks. The Anglo-Saxon invasion in the fifth century destroyed whatever remnants of intellectual life remained in the island, save for a handful of refugee scholars in the west, and the monastic schools of Wales—whence proceeded the men who founded the seats of learning which now sprang up in Ireland. Safe from the devastation of Europe by the barbarians, Ireland became the sanctuary of thousands of fugitives, and its monasteries the training-ground for missionaries, who in turn carried back their scholarship to the English and other nations. To England came not only this monastic learning, but, in the seventh century, the educational stimulus of the Roman missionaries under the influence of which three great schools were to rise into prominence—Canterbury, Jarrow, and York—until England in turn led the van of intellectual progress.

There must have been some sort of recognised system of book distribution at the back of this intellectual revival. The epics of the Anglo-Saxons were spread by recitation and preserved by memory, but among the scholars themselves a considerable traffic in books was inevitable. This traffic probably was based on the long traditions of Rome brought by the Roman missionaries, but of this we can judge only by inference. There are occasional scraps of evidence to show that in the downfall of the Empire the book trade had not been completely extinguished in Italy—and perhaps in Gaul as well—but the attempt to bridge the gulf between the classic trade and the English reading world of the early manuscript days is at the best unsatisfactory. We read of Benedict Biscop's several journeys to and from Rome, and elsewhere, laden with precious volumes for the great twin abbeys of Wearmouth and Jarrow, the first of which he founded in 674 and the second in 682; of the literary additions made by his successor Ceolfrid; of book-lovers like

Aldhelm, Bede and Acca; of Aldfrith of Northumberland ordering copies of Adamnan's book *De Locis Sacris* for the use of 'lesser persons'; of Ælbert's noble library at York; and of other evidences of England's scholarly activity in these early Middle Ages. But the system of book distribution which lay behind this development was not such an organised trade as in the days of Imperial Rome. Books were now written and published by the authors themselves, as in the more distant ages of antiquity.

Bede kept in touch with the monasteries not only of England, but of the Continent, and had copiers at work as far away as Rome. He may be said to have published his *History* from the monastic cell at Jarrow in which he spent most of his life, for when it was finished—in or about the year 731, at which it is brought to an end—he sent the book thence to his friend Albinus, an ecclesiastic who had urged him to undertake the work and helped him with information. 'Wherefore', he writes, 'I have with great propriety sent it to you to be copied. But I intend to repay you by forwarding to you another volume for the same purpose . . . namely, that which I have lately published on the building of Solomon's Temple, and its allegorical signification. And I humbly beseech you, most loving father, and Christ's servants who are with you, to intercede fervently with the righteous in behalf of my frailty; and to admonish those to whom you shall show my work to do the same.'

That was the pious way they had of publishing books in those days, just as, later in the Middle Ages, we can see, in several illuminated manuscripts, John Lydgate on his knees before Henry VI, or some other generous patron, presenting him with a copy of his new book of poems. Such a presentation, as in the case of Bede's offering to Albinus, practically constituted the first publication of a new work. When Bede died—to return to our restricted book world of the eighth century—the seat of learning passed from Jarrow to York, which then became the centre of education in Western Europe. It was Ælbert's famous library, already referred to, which furnished us, thanks to Alcuin's metrical account of its treasures, with the earliest book list of which we have any knowledge. The catalogue shows us that in addition to the books of such native scholars as Bede and Aldhelm, York possessed the works of Augustine, Jerome, Hilary, Ambrose, Gregory, Athanasius, Pope Leo, Basil, Chrysostom, and other Fathers of the Church. Virgil, Statius and Lucanus were among the classics, together with

Propertius, Aratus, Juvenius, one of the earliest of the Christian poets, and Lactantius, the 'Christian Cicero', who enjoyed a great vogue in the Middle Ages. Among historians and philosophers were Pliny, Boëthius, Orosius, Aristotle and Cicero; and the formidable list of grammarians includes Phocas, Donatus, Probus, Priscianus, Servius, Eutychius and Commianus.

The fame of this library spread throughout Europe. It was a literary treasure-house to which most scholars turned until Alcuin left England for Charlemagne's Court towards the end of the eighth century, when the centre of education was transferred to the schools of Charles the Great. The decay of learning in England had already set in before Alcuin left the country, and in the ninth century the Danes completed its destruction. We are again forced to wander abroad for our next traces of the book world, and these are to be found only in the monasteries.

The production and preservation of books, as well as their serious study, had been one of the leading principles of monastic life since the early part of the sixth century, when St. Benedict, striking at the roots of the evil which threatened the very existence of monachism, branded idleness as 'the enemy of the soul', and added the vow of labour to the other rules of poverty, chastity and obedience. The later orders followed St. Benedict's sagacious example, and the monasteries became the one recognised home and refuge of Letters—the Vestal Virgins, as a French writer has said, who, through all the vicissitudes of the Dark Ages, prevented the sacred lamp of learning from burning out. The phrase is specially appropriate when applied to the nuns, who played a noble part in the preservation and distribution of sacred literature. Some of the most beautiful manuscripts that have come down to us were produced by medieval nuns.

How religiously the scribes approached their work may be gathered from an eighth-century manuscript, in which we find one of the *scriptoria* receiving the following form of benediction: 'Vouchsafe, O Lord, to bless this *scriptorium* of thy servants, and all that dwell therein; that whatsoever sacred writings shall be here read or written by them, they may receive with understanding and bring the same to good effect, through the Lord, . . .'¹ The monks have often been accused of scraping ancient parchments in order to substitute their own writings for the texts of Greek and Latin

¹ Maitland's *Dark Ages*.

classics, but as most of these palimpsests were made after the Norman Conquest, when parchment became increasingly valuable, it is more probable that the manuscripts of the earlier Middle Ages were thus treated rather than the older parchment of the classics.

Our losses in this respect, however, have been greatly exaggerated. And our gains have been by no means inconsiderable—legends of the saints, treatises of the Fathers of the Church, and possibly some of the early chronicles with which English history especially is so richly endowed. For almost every monastery of importance had its own historiographer, whose duty it was to carry on the annals left by his predecessor.

Some at least of the monastic book-makers of the Dark Ages proved themselves worthy successors of Atticus in the pains which they took to secure the accuracy of their texts.

In England monachism, after falling into complete decay, was only just beginning to revive. Alfred worked wonders in his efforts to kindle a new enthusiasm for education and literature towards the end of the ninth century, and in the following century his efforts bore fruit in the re-creation of the monasteries under St. Dunstan and King Edgar. But the people themselves were too busy fighting for their lives and homes against the Danes to profit greatly by the revival. It is not until the Norman-French cultivation made its way into England in the eleventh century that we can follow the book trade in this country with any degree of continuity. With the Norman Conquest England was brought definitely into the full current of European culture, and received an impetus which she sorely needed to her whole national life.

But in the ecclesiastical settlement under William the Conqueror and Lanfranc both the Anglo-Saxon books and the monks who had so patiently compiled them were often shamefully treated, however much the intellectual standard of the Church may have been raised in the process. The Norman bishops and abbots by whom the native ecclesiastics were displaced despised the Anglo-Saxon writings which they found in their new monasteries. Many Anglo-Saxon books were cut up for binding, or erased to make room for some transcript in Latin, Latin gradually superseding the Anglo-Saxon which had been employed in all the national literature since Alfred's day. Norman monks were doubtless introduced for their skill as transcribers and decorative artists, though the art of illuminating manuscripts, which is as old almost as humanity itself, had already

been brought to a high state of perfection in England, having been introduced from Ireland centuries before. The finest of the existing specimens bear witness both to the skill and infinite patience of these unknown craftsmen. It is not surprising that books in those days could be so costly, or that the *scriptorium* of the monastery in which such work was done was sometimes so jealously guarded that no visitors were allowed there except the abbot, the prior, the sub-prior and the precentor. That, at least, was one of the rules of St. Victor, and similar restrictions were probably in force at most monasteries where gold and jewels were freely used in the binding and illuminating of books. The art of decoration and illumination became everywhere so splendidly ornate that Odofredi, the Bolognese jurist, had some cause for complaining, in the thirteenth century, that writers were no longer writers, but painters. For law books were frequently as resplendent as missals, psalters and prayer-books. It is not fair, however, to regard the cost of such sumptuous works as these as a true index to the prices of books in the Middle Ages. Doubtless it was more for its binding and decoration than its intrinsic worth that the Countess of Anjou paid in the year 1056 for a copy of the homilies of Haimon, Bishop of Halberstadt, two hundred sheep, a hogshead of wheat, another of rye, a third of millet, and a certain number of marten skins. The simple truth, as Maitland says, is that there has always been such a thing as bibliomania since there have been books in the world.

As the manuscript period reached its more elaborate stage the makers of books in the monasteries specialised in their different departments of work. One monk would prepare the parchment by rubbing it with powdered pumice-stone, or obtain suitable 'pounce', such as the powdered bone of the cuttle-fish. Then he would cut it into sheets of the required size, and, having ruled the pages, hand it to the monk whose particular forte was writing. The scribe himself would leave the initials and borders for the illuminators, whose work seems frequently to have been neglected—or, maybe, stayed by the hand of Death, if we are to judge by the number of unfinished manuscripts which have come down to us. It is not difficult to imagine ourselves back in one of these secluded bookshops as we turn over the pages of an early fourteenth-century missal, for example, with its glowing splashes of burnished gold, and decorative effects as vivid in colouring to-day, almost, as when the monks themselves were putting the finishing touches to the work. The

small 'leading letter' for one of its elaborate initials, left by the transcriber for the guidance of the illuminator, has been left as it stood; and on the last page the outline sketches have never been filled up. It recalls the story of that monk of Wedinghausen, in Westphalia, who died at his desk, his pen still in his hand. Years afterwards, we are told, his grave was opened, whereupon it was found that his good right hand was as fresh and firm of flesh as on the day of his death. And, lest anyone should doubt this story, the hand and pen may be seen to this day among the holy relics preserved in the monastery chapel.

There was a strict, if variable, system of lending and borrowing books, even in the monasteries themselves. In certain cases books could not be lent except to neighbouring churches, or to persons of distinction and substantial means; and then only on the deposit of books or other articles of at least equal value. King John, when he borrowed 'the book called *Pliny*' which had been in the custody of the Abbot and Convent of Reading, had to give a pledge for it. Some monasteries went so far as to refuse to make any loan of the kind, under no less a penalty than that of excommunication. This appears to have been the case at the Abbey of Croyland, where, according to the so-called *History of Ingulph*, 'the lending of their books, as well the smaller without pictures as the larger with pictures', was thus strictly forbidden. For greater safety the books in the libraries were often chained to the desks. 'Cursed be he who shall steal or tear out the leaves, or in any way injure this book', is the anathema which will be found inscribed in some of these old volumes; as, indeed, was advised by that prince of fourteenth-century book-lovers, Richard de Bury, Bishop of Durham, in *Philobiblon*: 'There are also certain thieves who enormously dismember books by cutting off the side margins for letter paper, leaving only the letters or text, or the fly-leaves put in for the preservation of the book, which they take away for various uses and abuses, which sort of sacrilege ought to be prohibited under a threat of anathema.' A choice collection of these monkish warnings will be found in J. W. Clark's learned work on *The Care of Books*.

If all that the worthy Bishop says in *Philobiblon* be true the monks of his day had sadly degenerated. They had little of his own reverential devotion to study, being more intent on the 'emptyings of bowls' and 'such things as we are accustomed to forbid to secular men' than on the wisdom and companionship of books. They were,

indeed, reverting to the old order of things which, centuries before, had induced St. Benedict to institute the vow of labour, and a century or so later was to lead to the downfall of monachism in England. Though books in manuscript were never so brutally treated as during the suppression of the monasteries by Henry VIII, they now suffered many cruel indignities through the laxity of discipline and morals among those whose predecessors had proved so worthy of the trust imposed upon them. Every student of the subject knows the story of how Boccaccio paid a visit to the famous monastery of Monte Cassino, the foundation of which was laid by St. Benedict himself, and was horrified at the deplorable condition in which he found the library there. Dust and dirt lay an inch thick everywhere, covering and corroding manuscripts which would now be of priceless value. The weeds on the window-sills had grown so thick and tall that the whole room was darkened; but Boccaccio saw clearly enough to notice that many of the books had been brutally mutilated, some having half their contents forcibly removed, and others—as in the cases complained of by his English contemporary, Richard de Bury—having their margins cut away. More in sorrow than in anger, Boccaccio went to one of the monks in the cloisters and asked how it was that the books had been so treated. The monk admitted quite frankly and unconcernedly that when they wanted a few pence they cut off the blank margins of the old manuscripts or erased some of the pages and turned them into small devotional books, for which there seems to have been a ready sale. Not a word about the shameful state of neglect into which everything had been allowed to fall.

Records of this description are mostly from the Continent, but Richard de Bury's bitter complaint, and other references, leave us little room for supposing that our own monks at this period were much better. In a passage in Richard de Bury's *Philobiblon* which we are tempted to quote at length the books themselves are allowed to air their grievances:

In the first place, we are expelled with heart and hand from the domiciles of the clergy, apportioned to us by hereditary right, in some interior chamber of which we had our peaceful cells: but, to their shame, in these nefarious times we are altogether banished to suffer opprobrium out of doors. Our places, moreover, are occupied by hounds and hawks, and sometimes by a

biped beast; woman to wit,—whose cohabitation was formerly shunned by the clergy, from whom we have ever taught our pupils to fly, more than from the asp and the basilisk; wherefore this beast, ever jealous of our studies, and at all times implacable, spying us at last in a corner, protected only by the web of some long deceased spider, drawing her forehead into wrinkles, laughs us to scorn, abuses us in virulent speeches, points us out as the only superfluous furniture lodged in the whole house; complains that we are useless for any purpose of domestic economy whatever, and recommends our being bartered away forthwith for costly head-dresses, cambric, silk, twice-dipped purple garments, woollen, linen and furs: and indeed with reason, if she could see the interior of our hearts, or be present at our secret councils, or could read the volumes of Theophrastus and Valerius, or at least hear the 25th Chapter of Ecclesiasticus with the ears of understanding.

We complain, therefore, because our domiciles are unjustly taken from us,—not that garments are not given to us, but that those which were formerly given are torn off by violent hands, insomuch that our souls adhere to the pavement, our belly is agglutinated to the earth, and our glory is reduced to dust. (Ps. xliv. and cxix.) We labour under various diseases; our back and sides ache, we lie down disabled and paralysed in every limb, nobody thinks of us, nor is there anyone who will benignly apply an emollient to our sores. Our native whiteness, perspicuous with light, is now turned tawny and yellow; so that no medical man who may find us out, can doubt that we are infected with jaundice. Some of us are gouty, as our distorted extremities evidently indicate. The damp, smoke and dust with which we are constantly infested, dim the field of our visual rays, and superinduce ophthalmia upon our already bleared eyes. Our stomachs are destroyed by the severe griping of our bowels, which greedy worms never cease to gnaw. We suffer corruption inside and out, and nobody is found to anoint us with turpentine; or who, calling to us on the fourth day of putrefaction, will say, ‘Lazarus, come forth.’ . . .

Again: we complain of another kind of calamity, that is very often unjustly imposed upon our persons; for we are sold like slaves and female captives, or left as pledges in taverns without redemption.

Richard de Bury himself kept his own staff of transcribers, and took advantage of all the facilities then available for adding to his beloved library. Churchmen eager for his favours searched for him in all parts of the Continent, and he never missed an opportunity when calling at a monastery, of visiting the library chests and other repositories of books; 'for there, amidst the deepest poverty, we found heaped up the most exalted treasures'. In addition to these exceptional facilities, he adds that: 'We easily acquire the notice of the stationers and librarians, not only within the provinces of our native soil, but of those dispersed over the kingdoms of France, Germany and Italy, by the prevailing power of money. No distance whatever impeded, no fury of the sea deterred them; nor was cash wanting for their expenses when they sent or brought us the wished-for books.' Unfortunately neither the Bishop's library which he collected with so much care and devotion, nor the 'special catalogue' which he drew up for the use of his scholars, is any longer in existence. The books were destroyed or dispersed in Henry VIII's reign, during the suppression of Durham College, which the Bishop founded at Oxford on the site now occupied by Trinity College.

The ready means of private book distribution in England in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries are indicated in the wide circulation of the completed translation of the Bible by John Wycliffe, who died in 1384. This version, revised by John Purvey, was severely proscribed by the Convocation of Canterbury in January 1409, yet copies of it were spread all over the country by various unauthorised means until superseded by Tyndale's translation and other printed versions in the first half of the sixteenth century. There is additional evidence of some early system of book distribution in the signs which exist of the extensive circulation of William Langland's *Vision of Piers Plowman*. Langland, who died somewhere about the year 1400, issued his poem in three distinct forms, or editions, and some fifty manuscript copies are known to be still in existence. He sought no pecuniary reward, preferring, apparently, to live the life of poverty and unselfishness which he preached so earnestly in the old alliterative measure of his Anglo-Saxon poem. Doubtless he was his own publisher—if we may use such a term in this connexion—issuing copies of his work in his own hand from his house in Cornhill, where he lived with his wife Kitte for many years.

The growth of the medieval university marks the beginning of a new chapter in the history of bookselling. The coming of paper and the increasing demand for books among the people had already given birth to another class of book-makers, the scribes and *stationarii*—so called, according to Kirchoff, to distinguish the stationary, or resident, booksellers from the wandering pedlars. Thomas Fuller offers a similar derivation, but it is much more quaintly put in his seventeenth-century English: '*Stationarii*—publicly avouching the sale of staple-books in standing shops (whence they have their names) as opposite to such circumforanean pedlars (ancestors to our modern Mercuries and hawkers) which secretly vend prohibited books.' Henry Hallam, in his *Literature of Europe*, says that 'these medieval booksellers were denominated *stationarii* perhaps from the open stalls at which they carried on their business, though *statio* is a general word for shop, in Low Latin. They appear by the old statutes of Paris, and by those of Bologna, to have sold books on commission; and are sometimes, though not uniformly, distinguished from the *librarii*; a word which, having originally been confined to the copyists of books, was afterwards applied to those who traded in them. They sold parchment and other materials for writing, which, with us, though, as far as I know, nowhere else, have retained the name of stationery, and naturally exercised the kindred occupations of binding and decorating. They probably employed transcribers.'

In Paris, which in the fourteenth century was the great book-market of the world, the stationers were controlled by the universities, and appear to have acted at first mainly as book-lenders. Their shops were in reality circulating libraries for the scholars. They sold books only as agents for the owners of manuscripts committed to their care, receiving a commission in this case of a bare two or three per cent. When they came to issue books of their own copying every work of the kind had to be submitted to the university for approval, and sold only at the price at which it was then assessed. There was reason in all this, for the Paris book trade appears to have owed its organisation and development largely, if not entirely, to the university, and the university saw to it that it fulfilled the purpose for which it was originally intended, namely, that of supplying the educational needs of the scholars, without at the same time contaminating their minds with doubtful or heretical books. Much the same system of control prevailed at the older

University of Bologna, and other Italian universities, as well as at Oxford and Cambridge.

Some curious facts regarding the status of the university booksellers in England may be gleaned from George Gray's work on *The Earlier Stationers and Bookbinders, and the First Cambridge Printer*, issued for the Bibliographical Society in 1904. The first reference to the Cambridge booksellers is in a decision of 1276, in which it is declared that the 'writers, illuminators and stationers, who serve the scholars only', were subject, like the members of the university, to the jurisdiction of the Chancellor, and could not be interfered with by the Archdeacon of Ely, who had claimed jurisdiction over the university, as well as over the town. The wives of the said writers, illuminators and stationers were rather heartlessly abandoned to the tender mercies of the Archdeacon. For these, it is added, 'being under the charge of adultery or any other crime, the cognizance and correction of which pertains to the Archdeacon in similar cases concerning other persons under his jurisdiction, and the rest of their family, not especially deputed to the service of the scholars, shall be under the Archdeacon's jurisdiction in all and everything, like other lay-persons in the town of Cambridge and our diocese of Ely'.

The stationers could only sell books which had been approved by the Chancellor as being free from heretical opinions. The power of the Oxford and Cambridge Universities as censors of the book trade in those days is seen in the series of resolutions for the suppression of Lollardism passed at the Convocation of Canterbury early in 1409.

Among other things it was ordained that no book or tract compiled by John Wyclife, or by anyone else in his time or since, or to be compiled hereafter, should be read or taught in the schools, hostels, or other places within the province, unless it should first be examined by the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge, or at least by twelve persons to be elected by each of these bodies, and afterwards expressly approved of by the Archbishop or his successors; that, when approved, the book should be delivered, in the name and by the authority of the university, to the stationers to be copied; and a faithful collation being made, the original should be deposited in the chest of the university, there to remain for ever.

The first 'stationarius of the University' of Cambridge of whom we have any record is one John Hardy, referred to in one of the

records as early as 1350, but for a hundred years after Hardy's death there is no mention of anyone holding such a post. From 1449 onwards, however, there is a constant succession of them. Their peculiar position and duties are thus defined by Sir Stanley Leathes in his edition of the Cambridge *Grace Book A*.¹

Stationaries: These persons occupied an anomalous position. They were not students, nor were they exactly servants or tradesmen. They were the official agents of the University for the sale of pledges,² and official valuers of manuscripts and other valuables offered as security [by needy students]. They seem to have received an occasional fee from the chest. The analogy of other Universities suggests that they were bound to supply books to the students at a fixed tariff, and that they also acted as intermediaries between buyer and seller when a student had a book to sell. Like the servants and tradesmen dependent on the University, they were under the University jurisdiction.

As at Oxford there appears in the fifteenth century to have been only one stationarius appointed—though the number increased after the introduction of printing—and various entries suggest that he was paid a yearly sum by the university. Other entries point to the interesting fact that the stationarius was also supplied with a gown as a distinctive mark of his office. He was responsible for the binding and repairing of books, as well as the chaining of them. The chains cost from 2*d.* to 4*d.* each. 'That the University did not monopolise the whole of the time of their stationarius', says George Gray, 'is shown by John Hardy (1351-54) being also an official in the Corpus Christi Gild, and by Walter Hartley, the last of the fifteenth-century stationers, who added to his work the post of parish clerk to the University church of St. Mary the Great, and saw to the cleansing of the pavements leading to the University buildings.'

The first stationer to figure in the Oxford records is one Robert, who was a 'notary and stationer in cattestrete' in the year 1308, but there are references to scribes and illuminators as far back at least as 1180. At the beginning of 1374 the number of booksellers in Oxford appears to have been so excessive that the university

¹ *Grace Book A*, 1454-88, edited by Sir S. M. Leathes, 1897.

² Pledges, or 'cautions', were deposited by every student as a guarantee that he would perform the requisite acts on admission to a degree. The 'cautions' were forfeited if he failed in the performance.

decreed that none except the sworn stationers, or their deputies, should sell any book exceeding half a mark in value. According to the terms of that statute, there were a great many booksellers in Oxford at that time who were not sworn to the university, with the result that 'books of great value are sold and carried away from Oxford, the owners of them are cheated, and the sworn stationers are deprived of their lawful business'.¹

The Oxford booksellers evidently continued in rather a bad way, for we learn from the same authority that in 1411 the university enacted that, 'as the duties of the University stationers are laborious and anxious, every one on graduation shall give clothes to one of the stationers'. But the Oxford stationer was not the only book-maker of his century to find himself short of clothes. In the *Paston Letters* there is a pitiful appeal from Sir John Paston's scrivener, who, writing from Sanctuary for a settlement of his account for books copied, adds that he will be grateful for the gift of an old gown.

In London the scriveners, or Writers of the Court Hand and Text Letters—the forerunners of the Stationers' Company—have been traced back in the civic records to the year 1357, while Chaucer was still a royal page and his Canterbury Pilgrimage probably as yet undreamt of; but they must have been in existence as recognised copiers and sellers of books long before then. Later—on 12th July 1403—we find all the various members of the original fraternity grouped together in a memorial to the Mayor and Aldermen of London, dated 12th July 1403,² as 'the reputable men of the Craft of Writers of Text-letters, those commonly called Limners [Illuminators] and other good folk; citizens of London, who were wont to bind and to sell books'. In their memorial these reputable men prayed for authority to elect wardens 'diligently to oversee that good rule and governance is had and exercised by all folks of the same trades in all works with the said trades pertaining, to the praise and good fame of the loyal good men of the same trades, and to the shame and blame of the bad and disloyal men of the same'. The petition was granted by the Mayor and Aldermen, 'for the reason especially that it concerned the common weal and profit'. The five-hundredth anniversary of the guild thus founded was commemorated by the Stationers' Company in 1904.

In Chaucer's day—and, indeed, throughout the Middle Ages—

¹ *Early Oxford Press*, by Falconer Madan, 1895.

² *Arber's Registers of the Stationers' Company*, vol. i, 1875.

the copiers of books attached little importance to authors' names, unless posterity had already made them famous. New books had nothing in the shape of a title-page. There is reason for supposing that Chaucer read Boccaccio's tales without knowing the name of the author to whom he was so deeply indebted. The modern title-pages came in with the printing press, though Caxton, who, like most early printers, transferred many features of the manuscript book into the printed copy, never seems to have adopted this new idea. Conservative in his tastes, it is not unlikely that he had many an argument on the subject with his friend, assistant and successor, Wynkyn de Worde, who introduced the title-page almost immediately after his master's death.

THE DAWN OF PRINTING

WITH the introduction of printing it is less difficult to gather up our scattered threads, though by no means easy to weave them into a satisfactory web. Our own early printers, heavily handicapped by their lateness in practising the new art, were faced by foreign competition, keen and well organised, and they were wise to feel their way cautiously. Caxton, who set up his press at Westminster in 1476, appears to have begun modestly enough, and to have made sure of a certain subscription before embarking on some of his larger ventures. In his *Legend of Saints* he tells us: 'I have submysed [submitted] myself to translate into English the *Legend of Saints*, called *Legenda aurea* in Latin; and William, Earl of Arundel, desired me—and promised to take a reasonable quantity of them—and sent me a worshipful gentleman, promising that my said lord should during my life give and grant me a yearly fee, that is to note, a buck in summer and a doe in winter.' The nobility were then the chief patrons of printed literature in England, for the simple reason that there were not enough readers among the common people to justify the printing of a large edition of any book; and naturally the more limited the number of copies the higher would be the price charged for each.

Unfortunately Caxton's account-book has not been preserved, so that it is impossible to say how much he charged for the works which are now worth more than their weight in gold. The only clue that we have lies in the fact that the fifteen copies of *Legends* which he left to St. Margaret's, Westminster, realised prices ranging from 5s. 4d. to 6s. 8d. Even this fact is not so illuminating as it seemed down even to William Blades' day, for Caxton's biographer, like every other authority until the present century, assumed that the books bequeathed by the printer were copies of his *Golden Legend*, the largest book produced by his press, containing 499 folio leaves, with illustrations. Fragments have, however, been discovered of a *Sarum Legenda*, printed for Caxton in Paris by Guillaume Maynyal, who in 1487 produced for Caxton an edition of the *Sarum Missal*; and it was probably this service-book, rather

than the *Golden Legend* itself, that was left to St. Margaret's Church.

That there was some system of 'sale or return' among the booksellers in Caxton's time is evident from the list of Thomas Hunte, stationer of the University of Oxford, which Falconer Madan prints at the end of his edition of *The Day-Book of John Dorne*. This list is an inventory, written on the fly-leaf of a French translation of Livy (printed at Paris in 1486, and now in the Bodleian Library), recording the books received by Hunte in the year 1483 from Peter Actors¹ and Joannes de Aquisgrano. These were two foreign stationers settled in London who appear to have travelled about the country in partnership as wholesale booksellers. Hunte gives a written promise faithfully to restore the books or pay the price affixed in the list. Most of the leading stationers of London had their travelling booksellers, if they did not always do the travelling themselves. Their chief markets were the great fairs, such as that of Stourbridge, which had been as early as the thirteenth century the chief fair in the kingdom. The importance of Stourbridge to booksellers lasted for several centuries after the invention of printing, for it is known to have had its Booksellers' Row as late as 1725. The leading stationers of London in the early days of printing also made a point, whenever possible, of attending the great book-market which was held twice a year at the Frankfort fair. It was here that accounts could be settled and the new books of the world seen. Frankfort, it may be added, remained the centre of the Continental book trade until after the Thirty Years War in the seventeenth century. It was then gradually superseded by the fair at Leipzig.

The dawn of printing brought with it, among other changes, a new form of binding in the shape of paste-boards—layers of waste sheets pasted together—instead of the old solid boards. Fearful as well as wonderful were some of the great tomes of the older style. The covers between which the leaves were fastened were literally wooden boards, as thick as the panel of a door. The wood used was commonly beech: it is from the German word *buche* (beech) that we get our 'book'. The boards were covered with leather and often beautifully embossed, with elaborate corners, clasps and brass nails on the outside; but they made the book so heavy that, as Erasmus said of Thomas Aquinas's *Secunda Secunda*, 'No man could carry it about, much less get it into his head.'

¹ Afterwards appointed Stationer to Henry VII. See p. 45.

Paste-boards came into vogue towards the end of the fifteenth century, and were often composed of printed sheets that had been discarded as of no use. Many rare typographical fragments have been brought to light in modern days from the search among the linings of these old bindings. A remarkable find of the kind was made by Blades in the library of the St. Albans Grammar School. Blades was examining a number of volumes in connexion with his life of Caxton, and pulled out one book which was lying flat upon the top of others. 'It was in a most deplorable state, covered thickly with a damp, sticky dust, and with a considerable portion of the back rotted away. The white decay fell in lumps on the floor as the unappreciated volume was opened. It proved to be Geoffrey Chaucer's English translation of *Boecius de Consolatione Philosophie*, printed by Caxton, in the original binding as issued from Caxton's workshop, and uncut! . . . On dissecting the covers they were found to be composed entirely of waste sheets from Caxton's press, two or three being printed on one side only. The two covers yielded no less than fifty-six half-sheets of printed paper, proving the existence of three works from Caxton's press quite unknown before.'

Some slight evidence of book prices in England at the beginning of the sixteenth century is afforded in the 'Privy Purse Accounts of Elizabeth of York', one entry showing that in 1505 twenty pence were paid for a *Primer* and a *Psalter*. Now in 1505, as Charles Knight observes in his life of Caxton, twenty pence would have bought half a load of barley and were equal to six days' work of a labourer. In 1516 *Fitzherbert's Abridgement*, a large folio law book, then first published, was sold for forty shillings—equal at that time to the cost of three fat oxen. Small wonder, if books fetched such prices as these, that Caxton declared that his works were not for the 'rude uplandish man'.

The printer little dreamt that the 'rude uplandish man' was in course of time to become a ruling patron of the press. Already he was making his influence felt on the Continent, thanks very largely to the Papal encouragement of cheapness, but even there he was not yet in sufficient force to warrant the large editions which some printers were induced to place on the market. The result of this is seen in the petition presented to the Pope in 1472 by the two German printers Sweynheim and Pannartz, who had settled in Rome. 'We were the first of the Germans', they wrote—though Ulrich Hahn claims the same distinction—'who, with vast labour

and cost, introduced this art into your Holiness's territories; and by our example encouraged other printers to do the same. If you read the catalogue of the works printed by us, you will wonder how and where we could procure a sufficient quantity of paper, or even rags, for such a number of volumes. The total of these books amounts to 12,475—a prodigious heap—and unbearable to us, your Holiness's printers, by reason of those unsold. We are no longer able to bear the great expense of house-keeping, for want of buyers, of which there cannot be a more flagrant proof than that our house, though otherwise spacious enough, is full of quire-books, but void of every necessary of life.' The immediate result of this appeal is unknown to us, but the fact that Pannartz abandoned printing for the art of engraving in the following year suggests that the Pope's assistance, if forthcoming at all, was not sufficient for the purpose. Sweynheim, who died some three years later, seems to have continued to print to the end, but not, apparently, with any enthusiasm.

The Church is known to have helped its early printers with funds, and long continued to support cheap books for the encouragement of learning among the people, as well as the propagation of works of approved theological teaching. When Leo x, in 1533, granted a privilege to the second Aldus for printing *Varro* he required that the book should be issued in a cheap edition. Gradually, however, as Dr. Putnam points out in his history of *The Censorship of Rome*, it dawned upon the ecclesiastical authorities that there was another side to the shield. The leaders of the Reformation as well as the rulers of the Church had given a warm welcome to the printing press, and were making full use of their new opportunities to spread their doctrines far and wide. Before a hundred years had passed the danger to the Church was met by the promulgation of a special edict prescribing penalties for the reading of heretical or doubtful works. The first Italian list of prohibited books and authors appeared in 1542, and seventeen years later was inaugurated the series of Papal Indexes which has been continued from time to time down to the present generation.

In England—to return to the dawn of printing in this country—the first printers and publishers were not so subject to the approving or disapproving nod of the Pope. Caxton, indeed, for his earlier services as 'Governor to the English Nation at Bruges' and as secretary or steward to the sister of Edward iv—Margaret, Duchess

of Burgundy—could count on Court influence to support him in his new enterprise. Though never officially appointed ‘Printer to the King’, he was patronised both by Edward iv and Richard iii, and printed several works under their ‘protection’. Of the hundred books which were issued from his press before his death in 1491 he was personally responsible for the translation of about twenty-five, besides editing almost every one of them.

Caxton has been taken to task by Gibbon for neglecting the classics, but our first printer-publisher knew what he was about. The favourite literature of the age among his chief patrons, the princes and nobility, was the ‘joyous and pleyaunt romaunce’, just as printed service-books were then the need of the clergy. Caxton, who, as he tells us in *Charles the Great*, had now to earn his living by his press, showed his common sense in issuing books for which he knew there was a demand. He realised that the classics could be obtained from abroad in editions which made competition on his part both unnecessary and futile. What he did for us—and for which we cannot be sufficiently grateful—was to produce works of Chaucer, Gower, Lydgate, Thomas Malory, and other gems of pure literature at one of the momentous stages in the development of the English language.

To Caxton we owe the first printed book-advertisement in this country of which we have any knowledge—a little poster not unlike the leaflets of some of our present-day publishers, except that, instead of stating that the work in question—the *Sarum Ordinale*, or *Pica*, containing the Salisbury order of Church services—could be obtained ‘of all booksellers’, it invited the reader to come to his office for it:

If it plesse any man spiritual or temporal to bye any pyes of two or three comemoracions of Salisburi use, enpryntid after the forme of this preset [present] lettre whiche ben wel and trully correct, late hym come to Westmonester in to the almonesrye at the reed pale, and he shal have them good chepe.

Below this is a line by itself, appealing to the public not to tear down the bill, and printed in Latin: ‘Supplico stet cedula’. Pye, it should be explained, was the English form of the Latin *pica*, or service-book, and the explanation of the term ‘pyes of two or three comemoracions’ accepted by Blades is that a pye of two comemoracions contained the rules for Easter and Whitsuntide, and

a pye of three commemorations those for Easter, Whitsuntide, and Trinity.

Wynkyn de Worde, the German assistant who inherited Caxton's business, and remained in the same house until 1500, was a craftsman of a very different stamp—'a man', in the words of E. Gordon Duff,¹ 'who was merely a mechanic, and who was quite unable to fill the place of Caxton either as an editor or a translator, one who preferred to issue small popular books of a kind to attract the general public rather than the class of book which had hitherto been published from Caxton's house'. He described himself, in common with most other makers and sellers of books in London, as a 'citizen Stationer'. In 1500 he moved to the sign of the Sun, in Fleet Street, renting two houses close to St. Bride's Church and immediately facing the entrance to Shoe Lane. Evidently affairs were prospering with the printer and publisher of popular books. Some years later he had another shop in St. Paul's Churchyard. Probably he had a bookstall in front of his Fleet Street house as well, for this appears to have been a custom of the craft which even the King's Printer in those days was not ashamed to follow.

St. Paul's Churchyard, however, was already the chief centre of the book trade, not only for London, but for the whole of the country. Many of the more important printers and stationers lived and carried on their business in the main row of houses which surrounded the church. Their smaller brethren, who were forced to have their printing offices elsewhere, and the foreign stationers, who now crowded to England as agents for the Continental printers, seized every available nook and corner for booths and stalls and unpretentious little shops of one story that served as 'lock-ups'. The competition of the foreigner with the native printer and stationer led to a Book War more bitter than anything of the sort that we have experienced in modern times. There was much to be said for both sides. The printing press and the book trade developments which sprang immediately from it had made vast strides on the Continent long before they were established in this country. In 1484, when Richard III passed the Act which contained a direct encouragement to foreigners to bring their printing and their books to England, there were fifty printers at work in Venice alone, and in Germany, France and Spain they could be counted by the score.

¹ *The Printers, Stationers, and Bookbinders of Westminster and London from 1476 to 1500.*

Yet England at this date could boast of only three other presses at work besides Caxton's—that of the Oxford printer whose imprint of 1468 for 1478 threatened at one time to deprive Caxton of his glory as England's first printer; that of the mysterious schoolmaster of St. Albans who printed a few books between 1479 and 1486; and that of John Lettou, the accomplished foreigner who set up the first press in the City of London (1480), four years after Caxton had started at Westminster, and continued for a time in partnership with an inferior Belgian printer named Wilhelmus de Machlinia. Such a limited number of presses could not supply anything like the growing demands of the reading public in England.

There was no English paper-mill, it may be added, until the end of the fifteenth century, the first English printers being dependent for their supplies upon various Continental countries where the making of paper—introduced originally from the East—had been understood for several centuries. John Tate, afterwards Lord Mayor of London, was the first paper-maker in England. The first book to be printed on his paper was Bartholomæus' *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, published in 1495-6, in which the historic fact is thus quaintly announced:

And John Tate the younger,
Joy mote he broke,
Which late hath in England
Doo make this paper thynne,
That now in owre Englysshe
This boke is prynted Inne.

In order to develop the new art of printing and all its accessories, the Act passed in 1484 for regulating the trade of foreigners in England carefully exempted every stationer, scrivener, illuminator, or printer of books, no matter 'of what nation or country he be', and gave him full licence to sell any books, and to settle within the said realm for the exercise of the said occupation.

This open invitation was readily accepted by Continental craftsmen. England, too, became a sort of dumping-ground not only for classics and educational works printed abroad, but for liturgical books, in which French printers especially excelled. So lucrative did the English trade become that type of English character was employed by many of the printers in the Low Countries, who sent across countless books printed in the vernacular. For half a century

there was practically free trade in the English book-market, much to the disgust of the brethren of the Stationers' Company, who, though they did not obtain their charter until 1557,¹ dated their corporate existence, as explained on p. 36, from 1403. Unfortunately their guild records up to 1554 are lost, but it is evident that they protected their interests before that time as well as they could. The Government's special encouragement of foreign printers and book-sellers was a prolonged and bitter grievance, resulting at times in ugly encounters between the aliens and the hot-blooded English apprentices. The feeling against foreign craftsmen in general culminated in the memorable 'Evil May Day' of 1517, when 2000 apprentices and the rougher element of the populace attacked the French and Flemish quarters and sacked the houses. Nearly a score of the ringleaders were afterwards hanged. When the aldermen sought the King's presence to ask pardon for the riot, says Holinshed, his Majesty sternly refused, saying that although the substantial citizens did not actually take part in the riot, it was evident, from their supineness in putting it down, that they 'winked at the matter'.

By restricting their trade to St. Paul's Churchyard or within the liberties of St. Martin's or Blackfriars the foreign printers and book-sellers who had neither become naturalised nor had taken out letters of denization were outside the jurisdiction of the Stationers' Company. Duff estimates that of all persons living in England connected with the book trade, printers, binders and stationers, from 1476 to 1535, something like two-thirds were aliens. It was a foreigner, Peter Actors, a native of Savoy, but resident in London, who, in 1485, was appointed Stationer to Henry VII. Actors was succeeded by William Faques, a native of Normandy, who had established himself as a printer in London, and so had the official title altered to that of Printer to the King—the first man to hold that position in England. Faques was followed, on his death, by another Norman, Richard Pynson, knowledge of Norman French probably proving a special recommendation for the post.

Richard Pynson, one of the best of the early London printers, suffered, like many other foreigners, from the national prejudice against alien workmen. On one occasion—in 1500—he brought an

¹ Not 1556, as stated by most writers on the subject. This point was first cleared up by E. Gordon Duff in 1905, in *A Century of the English Book Trade*.

action in the Star Chamber against Harry Squier and others for leading a murderous attack against himself and his servants, 'having made great oaths and promise that there shall neither Frenchman nor Flemming dwell nor abide within the said parish of Seynt Clementes'.¹ At other times Pynson deposed that his workmen had been waylaid in Fleet Street, and there 'cruellye assaulted, sore bete, and wounded', and put in such fear and peril of their lives that they durst neither go to church nor out of doors to do their master's business. For which assaults and menaces the said servants have departed from the said Richarde Pynson and have left righte greate besyneze, which he hath in hande, to be undone, to his greate hurte and utter distrucion. After that it is not surprising to learn that Pynson removed for better protection from the parish of St. Clement's, which was outside the City, to a house within Temple Bar, 'in fletestrete at the sygne of Ye George'. Here, doubtless, he became naturalised before receiving his appointment as Printer to the King. Pynson retained this title on the accession in 1509 of Henry VIII, in whose reign, however, the barriers of protection against foreigners were erected and increased until at length the great bulk of the alien printers, stationers and binders dwindled away to nothing.

Not only were they forced to pay double subsidies, but by an Act of 1523 they were allowed to employ none but English-born apprentices and not more than two foreign workmen, and were placed under the strict rule of the wardens of the Stationers' Company. Six years later they were further handicapped by a law which enacted 'that no stranger artificer not a denizen, who was not a householder the 15 of February last past, shall set up nor kepe any house, shop, or chambre wherein they shall occupy any handycraft within this realm'. The climax arrived with the Act which came into operation on Christmas Day, 1534, and formally annulled the free trade in books which had existed since the passing of the Act of 1484.

The chief object of the Act of 1534—especially the clause prohibiting any but wholesale purchases of foreign books—was as much to prevent the surreptitious importation of heretical writings as to protect the native craftsman. Its chief result, however, was the suppression of the more skillful alien, who, whatever harm he may

¹ *Select Cases in the Star Chamber*, edited for the Selden Society by I. S. Leadam, 1903.

have done to the pockets of his English brethren, had at least provided them with a healthy stimulus in the new art of printing.

*

Another royal proclamation was issued in 1530 against 'blasphemous and pestiferous Englishe bokes, printed in other regions and sent into this realme', as well as 'the admission and divulgence of the Olde and Newe Testament translated into English'. This proclamation, like many others on the same subject, was printed by Thomas Berthelet, who, besides being printer to Henry VIII—having succeeded to that position on the death of Pynson—was also bookseller and bookbinder to the King. Berthelet's address was in Fleet Street, 'nere to ye conduit at ye signe of Lucrece'. The bookstall which he kept outside his shop figured in a lawsuit brought in 1536 for assault on some Frenchmen, one of whom, it was stated, had endeavoured to hide himself under the King's Printer's stall.

The selling of prohibited books was too hazardous to tempt the regular bookselling trade—save in a certain number of isolated cases—but there were many illegitimate ways and means of smuggling them over, and no lack of enthusiastic reformers willing to run the risk of martyrdom in disseminating them among the people. 'Luther's inexhaustible fecundity flowed with a steady stream', writes Froude, 'and the printing presses in Germany and in the Free Towns of the Netherlands multiplied Testaments and tracts in hundreds of thousands.' It is more than probable, however, that the number of heretical books of foreign origin is much smaller than is commonly supposed, and that many of these so-called foreign books were actually printed in England.

The first edition of Tyndale's New Testament, with which the history of our present English Bible begins, was circulated in 1526 by the irregular booksellers—more especially by the 'Christian Brothers', who formed, in Froude's words, the first 'Religious Tract Society' in England. Hitherto the Reformers had been dependent on the manuscript translations of the Scriptures, and how eagerly even portions of these were bought up by the people is shown in Foxe's striking passage to the effect that in 1520 'great multitudes . . . tasted and followed the sweetness of God's holy Word almost in as ample manner, for the number of well-disposed hearts, as now. . . . Certes, the fervent zeal of those Christian days seemed much

superior to these our days and times, as manifestly may appear by their sitting up all night in reading and hearing; also by their expenses and charges in buying of books in English, of whom some gave five marks [equal to about £4 in our money], some more, some less, for a book. Some gave a load of hay for a few chapters of St. James or of St. Paul in English. . . . To see their travails, their earnest seekings, their burning zeal, their readings, their watchings, their sweet assemblies . . . may make us now, in these days of free profession, to blush for shame'. That was written in 1563, and more than three centuries later, as Bishop Westcott says in reprinting this extract in his *History of the English Bible*, the 'contrast is still to our sorrow'. But it was ever the way of the world to value most that which was hardest to come by.

The secret demand for Tyndale's New Testament was so great that in spite of all the Council's threats and the Bishop's anathemas six editions were exhausted before 1530. Yet so fierce and systematic was the persecution both then and afterwards that Bishop Westcott estimates that of these six editions, numbering perhaps fifteen thousand copies, there remain, of the first one fragment only, which was found in 1834 and is now preserved in the British Museum; of the second edition but two imperfect copies; and of the others two or three specimens which are not satisfactorily identified. The story of the memorable burnings of these works at St. Paul's and at Oxford, at which the prisoners were compelled to do penance by casting their faggots and books into the flames, and of Tyndale's betrayal and martyrdom, is beyond the scope of our narrative, though we shall have more to say presently on the progress of the Battle of the Bible itself.

Some of our brightest side-lights on the regular book trade in England in those early years of the sixteenth century are provided by *The Day-Book of John Dorne*, edited for the Oxford Historical Society by F. Madan in 1885. John Dorne appears to have been a Dutchman who settled in Oxford as a bookseller, and probably acted, apart from his English trade, as agent for a number of enterprising printers on the Continent. In the account-book edited by Madan we find a methodical record of practically all the books sold by him in the course of the year 1520—an early edition, as it were, of *Book Prices Current*. There is a great preponderance of Latin books, especially in theology and the classics. *A.B.C.'s* are met with repeatedly, but as they rarely fetched more than a half-

penny each—and even at that price thirteen on one occasion were sold ‘as twelve’—they probably, as the editor suggests, took the form of a single leaf of parchment or paper. Erasmus appears to have had the largest sale of any author, but Luther was also in considerable demand, the prices realised for his works ranging from threepence to three shillings. One shilling in those days, it may be pointed out, would be worth more than twelve of our money.

The list of English books, though fewer in number, is even more illuminating. There are penny almanacks, and ‘prognosticons in Englis’ for the same price—the larger ones two for threepence—these answering the same superstitious purposes as the prophecies of Mother Shipton and the more modern ‘Old Moore’. John Dorne had plenty of customers in his shop for his ‘balets’, or ballads, which could be had from a halfpenny upwards. Towards the end of the year there is a small run on ‘kesmes corals’, or Christmas carols, sold as single leaves for a penny, or in two leaves for twopence. *Robert the Devill* could be bought for threepence, *Roben Hod* for twopence, and *The Notbrone Mayde* for a penny. Housewives will be interested to learn that *The Bocke of Kokery* (Cookery) was to be had for fourpence.

Information as to the customs of the trade in London at this period is aggravatingly meagre. The nearest approach to a contemporary account that we possess is the following brief description (reprinted from Professor Arber’s *Transcript*) written by Christopher Barker, the Queen’s Printer, in 1582, the year in which he became warden of the incorporated Stationers’ Company: ‘In the tyme of King Henry the eighte, there were but fewe Printers, and those of good credit and component wealth, at whiche tyme and before, there was another sort of men, that were writers, Lymners of bookes and dyverse thinges for the Churche and other uses called Stacioners; which have, and partly to this daye do use to buy their bookes in grosse [wholesale] of the saide printers, to bynde them up, and sell them in their shops, whereby they well mayntayned their families.’ The addition of the ‘saide printers’ had greatly strengthened the forces and power of the first fellowship of London stationers, for the whole system of book production and distribution was now in their hands. The ups and downs of religious opinions in the later years of Henry VIII made it extremely difficult for some of them to steer a safe course, but on the whole they seem to have been singularly astute.

In 1535 came the first complete edition of the English Bible—the work of Miles Coverdale, though the New Testament was based on Tyndale's version. The names of the original publisher and place of printing of Coverdale's Bible remain somewhat of a mystery. But whoever was the printer—and most authorities agree that he was Christopher Froschauer, of Zurich—there is no doubt that the edition for sale in England was bought by James Nycolson, or Nicolai, and issued by him at Southwark. Coverdale's Bible, though first published in 1535, was not definitely 'set forth with the King's moost gracious licence' until the corrected edition appeared two years later. Then, in 1537, came the English Bible which John Rogers brought out under the name of Thomas Matthew—and has been known as 'Matthew's Bible' ever since—combining the labours of Tyndale and Coverdale. This was printed by Jacob von Meteren at Antwerp, where the sheets were bought by Richard Grafton—a member of the Grocers' Company, with strong leanings towards the reformed religion—in association with Edward Whitchurch, a fellow merchant. In 1538 Grafton and Whitchurch were also entrusted with the preparation of the Great Bible, and compensated for their outlay on the translation which that edition superseded.

Another new translation which suffered through the publication of the Great Bible was that of Richard Taverner, 'printed at London by John Byddell for Thomas Barthlet' (*sic*), and issued, like the larger work, in 1539. Taverner's Bible was only once reprinted. In November, 1539, while Grafton was preparing the Great Bible, letters patent were received from the King wherein, 'for the diversity of translations', Henry appointed Thomas Cromwell 'to take special care that no manner of person should attempt to print any Bible in the English tongue of any volume during the space of five years, but only such as should be deputed by the said Lord Cromwell'.¹

The Great Bible itself was printed (under Coverdale's direct supervision) in Paris—for the reason, according to Strype and Henry's letters on the subject to the French king, that 'better paper and cheaper' was to be had there than in London, 'and cheaper and more dexterous workmen'. Grafton and Whitchurch were largely financed in this undertaking by Anthony Marler, a wealthy member of the Haberdashers' Company; and Grafton, at least,

¹ *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, Strype, 1824.

was in Paris with Coverdale while the printing was being done at the press of Francis Regnault. All went well until the text was on the point of completion, when the Inquisitor-General for France stepped in and not only stopped all further progress, but forbade the removal of the sheets already printed. Luckily both Coverdale and Grafton succeeded in escaping, and, stealing back to Paris shortly afterwards, managed to buy up the whole plant and remove it to London—presses, type and workmen as well. They even rescued 'four dry-vats full' of the prohibited sheets, which the authorities had sold as wastepaper to a local tradesman, the remainder having been burnt in Maubert Place as heretical books. The interference of the Inquisition, therefore, was really a blessing in disguise, for with all the necessary material safely established in London there was nothing now to prevent the printing of as many copies as were wanted.

The Reformation must have seriously disturbed the regular book trade. Hardly anyone ventured to publish story-books, and even educational works were at a discount. The 'Summary Declaration of the Faith, Uses and Observances in England', dated 1539,¹ tells us that 'Englishmen have now in hand in every Church and place, almost every man, the Holy Bible and New Testament in their mother tongue, instead of the old fabulous and fantastical books of the *Table Round*, *Launcelot du Lac*, *Huon de Bourdeaux*, *Bevy of Hampton*, *Guy of Warwick*, etc., and such other, whose impure filth and vain fabulosity the light of God has abolished utterly'.

The freedom of the Scriptures, however, was soon restricted. With the Catholic reaction and the execution of Cromwell in 1540, the publishers of the Bible found themselves in anything but an enviable position. The bishops complained to the King of the notes which had been added to certain of the Bibles in English, and, repenting also of ever having sanctioned the Great Bible, proceeded to undo and proscribe much of the work in this direction which had been done under Cromwell's auspices. The free use of the Scriptures, they urged, had been responsible for all the heresies which had taken such deep root in Germany, and spread thence so dangerously into England. Grafton especially seems now to have fallen into disfavour, for he was rash enough, soon after Cromwell's death, to publish a 'ballade' in his patron's praise.

¹ Collier's *Ecclesiastical History of England*, 1708-14, vol. ii; *Collection of Records*, No. 47.

Conflicting accounts are given of the origin and upshot of this incident, but Burnet's version, which we are inclined to accept, is to the effect that 'Audley, the Chancellor, was Grafton's friend, and brought him off'. According to Strype and Foxe, however, he fell into more serious trouble not long afterwards for his share in the production of the now prohibited Matthew's Bible, 'which he, being timorous', says Strype, 'made excuses for'. Then he was examined about the Great Bible, and the notes that he was charged with intending to add thereto. 'He replied that he added none to his Bible, when he perceived the King and clergy not willing to have any. Yet Grafton was sent to the Fleet, and there remanded six weeks, and before he came out was bound in three hundred pounds that he should neither sell nor imprint any more Bibles till the King and the clergy should agree upon a translation.'

The situation was deplorable for those who were pecuniarily interested in the Bible trade. Early in 1541 Anthony Marler, the haberdasher, who had largely financed the Great Bible, presented a petition to the Privy Council pointing out that he would be ruined unless his Bibles were sold, and praying for a proclamation that every church still unprovided with it should purchase one, according to the King's former injunction. It was thereupon agreed 'that there should be such a proclamation, and that the day limited for having the said book should be Hallow Mass'.¹ The Privy Council had already fixed the price at 10s. for unbound copies and 12s. for copies stitched and bound. The proclamation, which was issued on 6th May 1541, confirmed the injunctions heretofore set forth by which the King 'intended his subjects to read the Bible for their instruction humbly and reverently; not reading aloud in time of Holy Mass, or other divine service, nor, being laymen, arguing thereupon. Many towns and parishes having failed to accomplish this, they are straightly commanded, before All Saints' Day next, to provide and set up Bibles of the largest volume, upon penalty of 40s. for every month's delay after All Saints' Day, half to go to the informer. The sellers of such Bibles are taxed to charge for them not above 10s. for Bibles unbound, or 12s. for Bibles well bound and clasped'.² On 11th March of the following year, as may also be seen in the *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, Marler further succeeded in obtaining a patent appointing him 'sole

¹ *Letters and Papers of the Reign of Henry VIII*, vol. 16, 1st May 1541.

² *Ibid.*, vol. 16, 6th May 1541

authority to print the Bible in English during the space of four years next ensuing¹.

The authorities further tightened their hold over the press in this year of 1542 by issuing a proclamation which, in addition to forbidding anyone, after the ensuing 31st August, to 'receive or keep the text of Tyndale's or Coverdale's translation of the New Testament, nor any other than is permitted by the Act of Parliament made', declared that henceforth no printer was to issue 'any English book, ballad or play, without putting his name and the name of the author and day of the print; and the printer shall present the first copy to the mayor of the town where he dwells two days before allowing any other copy to leave his hands. From the day of this proclamation no person shall bring into the realm any English book printed beyond sea concerning Christian religion, nor shall sell any English book printed beyond sea without the King's special licence.'¹

On turning up this proclamation we discovered an interesting fact in connexion with the history of the Stationers' Company itself. The dearth of records before the royal incorporation under Mary I has been frequently remarked upon, but no writer on the subject, so far as we know, has ever mentioned that the Company applied for a charter in the reign of Henry VIII. The fact is revealed in the seventeenth volume of the *Letters and Papers of the Reign of Henry VIII*, edited by Dr. Gairdner (1900). In an account of the proceedings of the Convocation of Canterbury, dated 17th March 1542, there appears the bald statement to the effect that 'the Prolocutor exhibited a book in parliament for the incorporation of the Stationers, to be referred to the King'. That is all. And it is impossible now, unfortunately, to say what happened. Perhaps the King, who had beheaded his fifth queen only a month previously, was too busy seeking a sixth wife to be bothered about such a trifle as a charter for London's stationers; but, whatever happened to the application, we know that the stationers had to wait another fifteen years for their incorporation. It is significant that on both occasions when they applied for this the Catholics were doing their utmost to stem the rising tide of the Reformation. Either the leanings of the stationers were on the side of the Catholics, or they stifled whatever religious convictions they may have possessed in order to seize the best opportunity for increasing the power and importance of their craft. For, as a long-established civic guild, they were

¹ *Letters and Papers of the Reign of Henry VIII*, vol. 17, March 1542.

strong enough already to be invaluable to the authorities in their crusade against prohibited books; and it was as much to their advantage as to the ecclesiastical authorities to suppress the lawless bookseller.

For all this zeal in the closing years of Henry VIII, the number of prohibited books still circulated in England caused increasing alarm. In April 1543 proceedings were taken against eight printers, including Grafton and Whitchurch, and twenty-five booksellers, for issuing unlawful books. Each of the prisoners was compelled to send in a true list of all the books and ballads he had bought and sold during the three preceding years—lists which, unfortunately, cannot now be traced. This fresh disgrace was the more unfortunate for Grafton and Whitchurch since, only three months previously—on 23rd January—having regained the fickle favour of the authorities, they had received the exclusive privilege of printing all the Church service-books, ‘for Sarum use’, within the King’s dominions for seven years. Most of the prisoners on the present occasion were released in a fortnight, but Whitchurch and Grafton were detained for nearly a month. Further restrictions against the English Bible were imposed in 1543. For, declared Parliament in that year:

The King’s Majesty perceiveth that a great multitude of his said subjects, most specially of the lower sort, have so abused the same that they have thereby grown and increased in divers naughty and erroneous opinions, and by occasion thereof fallen into great division and dissension among themselves, to the great unquietness of the Realm and other his Majesty’s Dominions. For remedy thereof be it enacted by the authority aforesaid that from and after the first day of July next coming, no women nor artificers apprentices, journeymen, serving men of the degrees of yeomen and under, husbandmen nor labourers, shall read within this Realm, or in any other the King’s Dominions, the Bible or New Testament in English, to himself or any other, privately or openly, upon pain of one month’s imprisonment for every time [of so] offending contrary to this Act, and being thereof convict in such manner and form as is aforesaid.

The Reformation remained in this state of reaction when Henry VIII died (1547). The English Bible at once leaped into power again. In the few short years of Edward VI’s reign there

were published no fewer than thirteen or fourteen editions of the complete Book, as well as thirty-five Testaments. 'In King Edward the sixt his Dayes'—to come back to Christopher Barker's account—'Printers and printing began greatly to increase: but the provision of letter [type], and many other thinges belonging to printing, was so exceeding chargeable that most of those printers were dryven throughe necessitie to compound before [hand] with the booksellers at so lowe value, as the printers themselves were most tymes small gayners, and often losers.' The trade at this time was busy not only with the English Bible, but with the new Prayer-book. The printer and publisher of this was Richard Grafton, who, rewarded at length for his leanings towards the Reformation, was appointed King's Printer on the accession of Edward, and held that post throughout the reign. When the first English Prayer-book of Edward VI was published in 1549 all the old service-books had to be destroyed; and on 13th August of the same year proclamations were issued by the Privy Council ordering that from henceforth no printer should print or 'putt to vente' any English book 'but such as should first be examined by Mr. Secretary Peter, Mr. Secretary Smith, and Mr. Cecil, or the one of them, and allowed by the same'. This Mr. Cecil was the future Lord Burghley, now the Protector Somerset's secretary and right hand, and already in the Princess Elizabeth's confidence. Not many weeks after this proclamation the Protector was arrested by Warwick, and Cecil discreetly withdrew from public life—to reappear in the following year as Secretary of State under Somerset's rival.

With the swing of the pendulum which brought in the reign of Mary I on the death of Edward VI in 1553 came yet another reaction, the full force of which must have been felt by the booksellers at once, well stocked as they were with English Bibles and other literary products of the Reformation. For though the royal proclamation issued on 19th July—after Mary had defeated the machinations of Northumberland and the reign of his unhappy 'nine days queen' had come to a close—assured her 'loving subjects' that in taking Mary for 'their liege sovereign Lady and Queen they should find her as benign and gracious a lady as others her most noble progenitors had been', there were ominous signs that must have made some of the booksellers at least change the complexion of their stock-in-trade as quickly as they could. Grafton, who printed this proclamation of the Queen's accession, had also issued

the similar announcement of poor Jane Grey, and for this, as well as for having printed the Bible in English and other Protestant books, he was at once deprived of his office as Royal Printer, John Cawood being appointed in his stead. 'Nor was this all her measure he found', remarks Strype, 'for in the next month he was clapped up in prison'. Whitchurch also was imprisoned for his share in the production of the English Bible, and they were both exempted from the pardon proclaimed by Mary at her coronation.¹ Prebendary Rogers, whose edition of the Scriptures they had published in 1537 under the name of 'Matthew's Bible', was summoned on 16th August before the Council as 'John Rogers, alias Matthew', and eighteen months later suffered at the stake at Smithfield as the first victim of the Marian persecutions. Coverdale, more fortunate, succeeded in escaping to the Continent. On 18th August 1553 a proclamation was issued which showed the book trade clearly what it had to expect from the new rule:

Forasmuch as it is well known that seditious and false rumours have been nourished and maintained in this realm by the subtilty and malice of some evil disposed persons . . . and printing of false found Books and Ballads, Rimes, and other Treatises in the English tongue, containing doctrine in matters now in question, and controversies touching the high points and mysteries in Christian religion; which Books, Ballads, Rimes, and Treatises are chiefly by the Printers and Stationers set out to sell to her Grace's subjects of an evil zeal for lucre and covetousness of vile gain; her Highness therefore straightly chargeth and commandeth all and every of her said subjects . . . that none of them from henceforth print any Book, Matter, Ballad, Rime, Interlude, Process, or Treatise . . . except they have her grace's special license in writing for the same, upon pain of incurring her Highness' indignation and displeasure.²

The English Bible, strangely enough, does not seem to have figured in any special measure for its destruction in Mary's reign.

¹ Grafton and Whitchurch practically retired from business on their release later in the year. Whitchurch married the widow of Archbishop Cranmer, and died in 1562. Grafton, who, among his general works, had issued this year Wilson's *Arte of Rhetorique*, lived eleven years later, becoming twice M.P. for London and subsequently (1562-3) Member for Coventry. Much of his later life he spent as a rival of John Stow in the compilation of English *Chronicles*, and, like Stow, is said to have died in very needy circumstances.

² Collier's *Ecclesiastical History*, 1708-14; *Records*, No. 58.

No new edition was permitted, and public copies found in churches were burnt, but no injunctions appear to have been issued against its private use. And in spite of the strict regulations of the Crown, the scattered army of Reformers on the Continent still saw to it that England was well supplied with 'seditious and heretical' literature. In June 1555 it was found necessary to issue a further proclamation authorising the warden of every company in London to search for such books as had either been smuggled over from the Continent or secretly printed in England. Another proclamation was issued at the same time against the service-books of Edward VI. The campaign of seditious literature went steadily on, increasing in activity as the time drew near for the Spanish marriage. Parliament now issued an order against the circulation of any book to the slander of the King or Queen under penalty of the loss of the right hand. And after the marriage there still seemed urgent need for further powers of repression. It was a ripe moment for the London stationers again to demand the royal charter, to which they had long considered themselves entitled. Philip and Mary, as they listened to the prayer for incorporation, saw in it a means of obtaining further control over the all-powerful and obnoxious printing press, and it was for this reason, more than anything else, that the charter of 4th May 1557 was granted.

That Mary and Philip hoped to make effective use of the newly incorporated Company in suppressing seditious and heretical books is clear from the preamble of the charter. The government of the 'community of the said mistery or art' was vested in one master and two keepers, or wardens; and no person within the realm was permitted to print anything for sale within the kingdom unless he belonged to the Company or held some licence by letters patent from the Crown. Furthermore, the master and wardens were empowered 'to make search whenever it shall please them in any place, shop, house, chamber, or building of any printer or bookseller whatever within our kingdom of England or the dominions of the same, for any books or things printed, or to be printed, and to seize, take, hold, burn, or turn to the proper use of the foresaid community, all and several those books and things which are or shall be printed contrary to the form of any statute, act, or proclamation, made or to be made'. The pains and penalties for breaking these regulations, or hindering the officers in the course of their duties, were three months' imprisonment for each offence,

and a fine of 'a hundred shillings of lawful money of England, one half thereof to us, the heirs and successors of the foresaid Queen, and the other half thereof to the foresaid Master, Keepers or Wardens and community'.

Flushed with its new importance, there can be little doubt that the Company used its powers with no half-hearted zeal, especially as the first master, Thomas Dockwray, was himself an ardent Catholic. Dockwray did not long survive his new honour, for he died in the first year of Elizabeth's reign. Meantime the war against heresy and heretical books was pursued with grim but unavailing energy. The Company might keep the regular trade under its drastic rule, but nothing could stop the ceaseless flow of surreptitious literature during the two and a half years of bitter disillusionment which the unhappy Mary had still to live. To what extreme lengths the forsaken queen was prepared to go in the last six months of her life is seen in the following proclamation, dated 5th June 1558, while Philip, who had dragged this country into his conflict with France, and had already lost Calais for England, was absent on the Continent:

Whereas divers books filled with both heresy, sedition and treason have of late and be daily brought into this realme out of foreign countries and places beyond the seas, and some also covertly printed within this Realme, and cast abroad in sundry parts thereof, whereby not only God is dishonoured, but also an encouragement given to disobey lawful princes and governors. The King and Queen's Majesties for redresse hereof, by this their present proclamation, declare and publish to all their subjects that whosoever shall after the proclaiming hereof be found to have any of the said wicked and seditious books, or, finding them, do not forthwith burn the same, without showing or reading the same to any other person, shall in that case be reputed and taken for a rebell, and shall without delay be executed for that offence according to the order of Marshall lawe.¹

It is curious that Robert Caley, the most prominent printer on the Catholic side, was not at this time a member of the Stationers' Company; nor did his religious fervour save him, in the year of incorporation, from being fined for printing without a licence.

¹ *Arber's Registers of the Stationers' Company.*

Mary's death put an end to Caley's press, yet this was the very time that he chose to take the freedom of the Company. Perhaps he cherished the hope that Elizabeth meant to make no drastic change, and that in course of time it might be safe for him to start afresh. If so, the gradual triumph of the Reformation must have shattered his hopes, for we hear of no more books issuing from Caley's press.

CHAPTER 4

THE BOOK TRADE UNDER QUEEN ELIZABETH

THE momentous event which stopped the Catholic printer from issuing any more books also brought back John Day, the distinguished printer and bookseller, who was as ardent a disciple of the Reformation as was Caley of the older faith. John Day was destined to play a leading part in the book world of Elizabeth's reign. Born in 1522, he started printing in 1546, moving, after a few years of partnership with William Seres,¹ to the old city gate called Alders Gate. 'John Day, Stationer, a late famous printer of many good books', says Stow in his *Survey*, 'in our time dwelled in this Gate, and builded much upon the wall of the citie, towards the parish church of St. Anne'. Apparently he joined the Stationers' Company from the Stringers' in the following year, but ceased printing when Mary, in the summer of 1553, became the first queen regnant of England. Day seems to have withdrawn to Norfolk at this time, for a note in *Machyn's Diary* proves that he was brought thence with his servant, together with a priest and another printer, and sent to the Tower for printing 'noythy bokes'. Whether these were books issued in Edward's time or surreptitious productions of the new reign it is impossible to say, and we have no means now of learning how long he remained a prisoner. According to the *Dictionary of National Biography* and other authorities, he fled abroad after his release, but if this were so he could not have been absent long, as he was included among the original members of the incorporated Company, in the Charter granted by Philip and Mary in 1557. After Elizabeth's accession he was rewarded for his services and sufferings in the Reformers' cause by a large share of patronage from the leaders of that party, becoming, as will presently be seen,

¹ William Seres afterwards joined partnership for a time with the printer and translator Anthony Scoloker, and in 1554 received letters patent for the printing of psalters, primers, and prayer-books. This privilege he lost on the accession of Mary, when he seems to have sought safety on the Continent, but it was renewed by Elizabeth. In his old age he assigned his business for a yearly rental to Henry Denham, another worthy of the Elizabethan book trade, who became a member of the Stationers' Company in 1560. Seres lived to be master of the same company for several years in succession, and died about 1579.

the printer and publisher of the works of Bishop Latimer, Archbishop Parker, and Foxe, the martyrologist.

Twelve months after her accession Elizabeth—to return for the moment to the story of the Stationers' Company—confirmed the charter granted by 'Lord Philip King and Lady Mary, late Queen of England, our dearest sister'. This was succeeded by the formal creation of the stationers as a livery company on 1st February 1560, by the Lord Mayor of London. The origin of the ecclesiastical licensing of books which now followed, and hampered the trade for many years, is seen in the *Injunctions given by her Majestie*—issued in the first year of Elizabeth's reign—which Professor Arber, in quoting the more important of the items in his *Transcript of the Stationers' Registers*, regards as the earliest printed notice of the Company in existence. One of these 'Injunctions' ordered the clergy, as in Cromwell's time, to provide each parish within three months with a copy of the English Bible of the largest volume. Later they were also enjoined to set up in some convenient place within the said church 'the "Paraphrases of Erasmus"', also in English, "upon the Gospelles" '.

Several editions of these and other injunctions were issued before the confirmation of the Company's charter by Elizabeth in November 1559. The order was never observed with any strictness, the licensing being left more often to the Stationers' Company, the officers of which, however, were always made to keep in their hearts the fear of the higher powers. The earliest injunctions of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners preserved by the Company were dated the following year, when the master and wardens were directed to prevent certain persons from printing the primers and psalters in English which had been licensed to privileged printers. Shortly after this we find the first record of an order relating to the entering of copies in the Company's registers—a rule which played an increasingly important part in the securing of copyright, for all members were now required to enter the title of any book which they regarded as their particular property, a fee being charged for each entry. Books printed under special privilege or State monopoly were exempt from registration, but otherwise every book published had to be entered in the Company's records—with the result that the Stationers' Registers now form a record of contemporary literature which, though not complete, is of supreme bibliographical value.

We have not long to wait in the new Queen's reign before meeting with the real Elizabeth in her dealings with the stationers. It was a time of much royal wooing, for the number of Elizabeth's suitors, both among foreign princes and her own subjects, was legion. When, in 1560, she went so far as to accept the preliminary gifts of the handsome King Eric of Sweden, the matter was regarded by many people as a settled thing. The result was that the more enterprising stationers—eager as any pictorial publisher of the present day—promptly issued portraits of the happy couple united. Whereupon they were gravely admonished by the Queen's Secretary of State, Sir William Cecil, afterwards Lord Burghley, in the following letter which he wrote to the Lord Mayor:

It may please your lordship, the Queen's majesty understands that certain bookbinders and stationers do utter certain papers, wherein be printed the face of her Majesty and the King of Sweden; and although her highness is not miscontented that either her own face or the said King's should be printed or portraited, yet to be joined in the same paper with the said King, or with any other prince that is known to have made any request for marriage to her Majesty, is not to be allowed. And therefore her Majesty's pleasure is that your lordship should send for the wardens of the stationers; or for the wardens of any other men that have such papers to sell, and to take order with them, that all such papers be taken and packed up together in such sort that none be permitted to be seen in any part. For otherwise her Majesty might seem touched in honour by her own subjects, that would in such papers declare an allowance to have herself joined, as it were, in marriage with the said King, where, indeed, her Majesty hitherto cannot be induced (whereof we have cause to sorrow) to allow of marriage with any manner of person.¹

A few years later the Queen's self-esteem was tried so sorely by the wide circulation of ill-favoured likenesses of her Majesty that Cecil was forced to draw up another energetic proclamation on the subject. The document is worth giving in full:

Forasmuch as through the natural desire that all sorts of subjects had to procure the portrait and likeness of the queen's majesty,

¹ Haynes's *State Papers*, 1740.

great numbers of painters, and some printers and gravers, had and did daily attempt in divers manners to make portraitures of her, wherein none hitherto had sufficiently expressed the natural representation of her majesty's person, favour, or grace; but had for the most part erred therein, whereof daily complaints were made amongst her loving subjects,—that for the redress hereof her majesty had been so importunately sued unto by the lords of her council and other of her nobility, not only to be content that some special cunning painter might be permitted by access to her majesty to take the natural representation of her, whereof she had been always of her own right disposition very unwilling, but also to prohibit all manner of other persons to draw, paint, grave, or portrait her personage or visage for a time, until there were some perfect pattern or example to be followed:

Therefore her majesty, being herein as it were overcome with the continual requests of so many of her nobility and lords, whom she could not well deny, was pleased that some cunning person should shortly make a portrait of her person or visage to be participated to others for the comfort of her loving subjects; and furthermore commanded, that till this should be finished, all other persons should abstain from making any representations of her; that afterwards her majesty would be content that all other painters, printers, or gravers, that should be known men of understanding, and so therein licensed by the head officers of the places where they should dwell (as reason it was that every person should not without consideration attempt the same), might at their pleasure follow the said pattern or first portraiture. And for that her majesty perceived a great number of her loving subjects to be much grieved with the errors and deformities herein committed, she straightly charged her officers and ministers to see to the observation of this proclamation, and in the meantime to forbid the showing or publication of such as were apparently deformed, until they should be reformed which were reformable.¹

Elizabeth did not deprive John Cawood of his official post as royal printer to which he had been appointed by Mary, in succession to Richard Grafton, in 1553, at a salary of £6, 13s. 4d., but she made him share the office with Richard Juge. It was Juge who published the first edition of the Bishops' Bible in 1568, between

¹ *Archæologia*, Society of Antiquaries, vol. ii.

which date and 1574 he was four times appointed master of the Stationers' Company. John Cawood was, in his turn, three times master of the Company, and took a deep interest in its affairs to the end of his life.

But let us return to Master John Day, whose story helps us better than any other to realise the new era which was beginning for the book trade with the coming of 'Great Eliza'. Day himself strikes the keynote of that epoch in his trade device, the design of which represents the rising sun, and a boy awakening his sleeping companion with the words 'Arise, for it is Day'—a double allusion to the printer's name and to the dawn of the Reformation. John Foxe, who published the first (Latin) part of his *History of the Acts and Monuments of the Church*—popularly known as Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*—at Strasburg in 1554, while seeking safety on the Continent during the Marian persecutions, issued the first English edition through John Day in 1563. Anthony à Wood tells us that on his return to England he was handsomely entertained at the Duke of Norfolk's 'Manor place called Christ Church'—the Duke having been one of Foxe's pupils—and 'from that house he traversed weekly every Monday to the house of John Day the printer, to consummate his Acts and Monuments of the Church, and other works in English and Latin'.

Day issued four folio editions of the *Acts and Monuments* in his lifetime, and was also associated with Foxe in other undertakings, the martyrologist probably acting for him as one of the learned correctors of the press who were then employed by the leading publishers of the time. Foxe had been so employed during his exile on the Continent, when he served as reader of the press to Oporinus (Herbst), who published his *Christus Triumphans* in 1556. Thanks to the patronage of that scholarly churchman and true booklover, Archbishop Parker, Day was the first printer to issue a book in Saxon characters—Ælfric's Saxon homily, edited by the Archbishop himself under the title *A Testimonie of Antiquitie* in 1567; and five years later, at the Archbishop's private press at Lambeth, he printed Parker's own work, *De Antiquitate Ecclesiæ Britannicæ*, which not only appeared in a new italic letter, but is believed to have been the first privately printed book ever issued in this country.

At this time, and for long afterwards, English books were almost entirely printed in the type known as black-letter, Roman type being but sparingly used, and that only for quotations and the like,

while the new italic letter, for which the Archbishop had a strong partiality, was rarer still—as may be seen in the following extract from a letter which he addressed to Lord Burghley in 1572. The letter relates to the work which he had arranged to be written by Dr. Clarke in reply to the great book of the Catholic controversialist Nicholas Sandars, entitled *De Visibili Monarchia Ecclesiæ*, which had appeared the year previously, and incidentally tells of Day's troubles with rival booksellers, who were evidently envious of his success:

. . . As for some particular matters which be not known to me I trust to have your counsell furthermore to the better accomplishment of this work, and others that shall follow. I have spoken to Day the printer, to cast a new Italian letter, which he is doing, and it will coste him forty marks, and loathe he and other printers be to printe any Latin booke, because they will not here be uttered, and for that bookes printed in England be in suspicion abroad. Now, sir, Day hath complained to me that, dwelling in a corner, and his brotherne envying him, he cannot utter his bookes which lie in his hande, two or three thousand pounds' worthe. His friends have procured of Pawles a lease of a little shop to be sette up in the church-yarde, and it is confirmed. And what by the instant request of some envious booksellers, the Mayor and Aldermen will not suffer him to sett it up in the church-yarde, wherein they have nothing to do but by power. This shop is but little and lowe, and leaded flatt, and is made at his great cost to the sum of forty or fifty pounds, and is made like the terrace, fair railed and posted, fitt for men to stand uppon in any triumph or show, and can in no wise either hurte or deface the same. And for that you of the Councell have written to me and others of the Commission to help Day, etc., I praie your lordship to move the Queen's Majestie to subscribe her hand to these or such letters, that all this entendment may the better go forward, wherein your Lordship shall deserve well both of Christ's Church and of the prince and state.¹

With such powerful patrons to help him, Day eventually succeeded in getting the little shop which had been the cause of so much agitation and pother. He used it like most other stationers in the Churchyard, merely for the purpose of selling his books, his

¹ Wright's *Elizabeth and her Times*, vol. i, 1838.

printing still being carried on at his dwelling over Alders Gate. In addition to his Saxon and Italian types, Day is said to have vastly improved the Greek. 'Day seems, indeed', according to Dibdin, 'to have been (if we except Grafton) the Plantin of old English typographers; while his character and reputation scarcely suffer diminution from a comparison with those of the illustrious contemporary just mentioned.' To which it may be added that he was one of the earliest music-printers in this country. He was also the publisher, among other notable books, of the first authorised editions of *Gorboduc* and Ascham's *Scholemaster*. Day lived until the summer of 1584—four years after attaining to the highest office of his craft, that of master of the Stationers' Company—and was buried at Little Bradley, in Suffolk. His epitaph is worth recording:

Here lies the Day that darkness could not blynde;
 When Popish foggs had overcast the sunne
 This Day the cruel night did leave behynd.
 To view and shew what bloodi Actes were donne
 He set a Fox to wright how Martyrs runne
 By death to lyfe. Fox ventured paynes and health
 To give them light; Day spent in print his wealth.
 But God with gayne returned his wealth agayne
 And gave to him as he gave to the poore.
 Two wyves he had partakers of his payne,
 Each wyfe twelve babes and each of them one more.
 Als [Alice] was the last increaser of his stoore,
 Who mourning long for being left alone,
 Set up this toombe, herself turned to a Stone.

The meaning of the last line, it is necessary to add, lies in the fact that the widow of John Day sought consolation in a second marriage. Day left the book trade at a time when it was full of troubles both from within and without. It had long been a grievance among the unprivileged men that all the plums of the trade had been picked by such monopolists as Day and Richard Tottel, the last of whom was also among the best known of the sixteenth-century publishers. He issued from the Hand and Star in Fleet Street not only law books, which he had the sole right to print, but the collection of poetry known as Tottel's Miscellany, as well as Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* (1554), the Earl of Surrey's *Æneid* (1557), and various editions of Grafton's *Chronicles*, Tottel having married

a sister of that worthy chronicler and printer. Monopolies similar to those just mentioned—and there were many others of the kind—pressed heavily and unfairly on the smaller and unprivileged men. They led to murmurings and a growing discontent which extended over many years of Queen Elizabeth's reign. In a document which Arber dates 'about August 1577', containing 'The Griefes of the Printers, glass sellers and Cutlers sustained by reason of privileges granted to private persons', the victims of these monopolies—printers and stationers to the number of 175, together with such others 'as do lyve by bookselling', who, though not members of the Stationers' Company itself, were free of other civic guilds, and thus qualified to practise any other trade—complained that the privileges lately granted by her Majesty 'hath and will be' their overthrow: 'Besides their wyves, children, apprentizes and families, and thereby the excessive prices of bookes, prejudiciall to the state of the whole Realme, besides the false printinge of the same.'

Among their grievances was that 'John Jugge, besides being her Majestie's printer, hath gotten the privilege for the printing of Bibles and Testaments, the which was common to all ye printers; Richard Tottel the printing of all kinds of lawe books, which was common to all Printers, who selleth the same at excessive prices, to the hindrance of a greate number of pore students; John Daye the printinge of *A.B.C.*: and Catechisms, with the sole selling of them by the collour of a Commission. There books were the onelie releif of the most porest of ye printers'.¹ It is curious to find among the signatories to the petition the name of Christopher Barker, who, in this same year of 1577, on the death of John Jugge, bought his patent for the printing of the Old and New Testament in English, succeeded him as her Majesty's printer, and became as stout a defender of privileges as any of the monopolists against whom he had just been pleading. It was one of the evils of this system of patents that they were generally granted for life, with the right of reversion to the owner's successor, so that as the popular books were seized upon one by one in this way it became more and more difficult for the poorer stationers honestly to secure even a hazardous living.

Small wonder that the more ardent spirits among the unprivileged members of the craft rebelled when they found that their

¹ Arber's *Registers of the Stationers' Company*, vol. i.

petitions led to no redress. Since the authorities made it impossible for them to compete on fair terms, they declared war, and adopted methods which warfare alone could seek to justify. They began by surreptitiously pirating their licensed rivals' copyrights, printing whole editions of their smaller and more popular properties under forged imprints, and selling them mainly in the provincial towns and among the country fairs, where there was less risk of detection. Two years before his death John Day took action against Roger Ward for printing, and William Holmes for selling, great numbers of the *A.B.C.* with his forged imprint, this leading to a memorable Star Chamber case extending from February to July 1582. Holmes pleaded ignorance, 'beinge a yonge man lately come owt of his yeares and but lately set upp for hym selfe'; but Ward, who was one of the most determined opponents of the monopolists, confessed to the printing of no fewer than 10,000 copies of the *A.B.C.*, prevaricated as to his responsibility, and pleaded in his defence that 'a verye small number in respecte of the rest of the Companye of Stacioners Prynters have gotten all the best bookes and coppyes [copyrights] to be printed by themselves by Privyledge, whereby they make bookes more dearer than otherwise they wolde be, and have lefte verye littell or nothinge at all for the resydue of the Company of Printers to lyve upon, unles they sholde worke under them for suche small wages as they of them selves please to geve them, whiche is not sufficiente to fynde suche workemen and their famylies to lyve upon, whereby they through their Priviledges inriche themselves greatlye and become (some of them) greate purchasers of Landes and owners of large possessyons. And the owners of the reste of the sayd Prynters beinge manye in number and moste of them howshoulders so extremely poore, that by reason of pretended Priviledges and restrayntes that happenethe thereby can scarce earne breade and Drinke by their trade towards their lyvinge. . . .'¹

Roger Ward seems to have suffered several terms of imprisonment for thus defying the authorities, but he stood to his guns; and not only Ward himself, but his stalwart wife, who on one occasion later in the same year held the 'fort'—in his feigned absence, so it was said—against the officials of the Stationers' Company, who had been sent to search his house, but had perforce to retire discomfited. It was but a few months later (December

¹ Arber's *Registers of the Stationers' Company*, vol. ii.

1582) that Christopher Barker drew up his report on the printing patents granted since the Queen's accession. Here he complains, among other things, that the Psalms in metre, which had been granted to Day by the Earl of Leicester, as well as the Small Catechism which Day printed with his *A.B.C.*, now properly belonged to him. These books, 'being occupied of all sorts of men, women and children, and requiring no great stock for the furnishing thereof', were profitable 'copies'. This was not his only grievance, for William Seres, he writes, also 'encrocheth farther' upon his preserves with the privilege for the printing of psalters, primers and prayer-books, which rightly belonged to Barker. Yet Master Barker really had small cause for complaint, and he frankly admitted that 'as it is I have the printing of the Olde and Newe Testament, the statutes of the Realme, Proclamations, and the Book of Common Prayer by name, and, in general works, all matters for the Church', which, shorn though these patents were of much of their profit, were nevertheless privileges to be thankful for.

From the same report of 1582 we can detect the gradual but continuous parting of the ways between the printer and the bookseller. We have already quoted the reference to this cleavage as noticed by Barker in dealing with the condition of the trade in the days of Edward VI, when the provision of letters (type) and other material for the press was so costly a matter that most of the printers were driven through necessity to compound beforehand with the booksellers at costs which were so low that the printers themselves 'were most tymes small gayners and often losers'. And in coming down to the days of 'our soveraigne Lady the Queen's Majesty that nowe is', he shows how the booksellers had pursued their advantage, and incidentally how necessary it was for some few printers at least to be protected by the Crown:

The booksellers [he explains] being growen the greater and wealthier number have nowe many of the best Copies and keepe no printing howse, neither beare any charge of letter, or other furniture but onlie paye for the workmanship, and have the benefit, both of the imprinting, and the sale of all 'Commentaries of the Scriptures', and (till of late yeres of all Schoole bookes, Dictionaries, Cronicles, Histories) bookes of Phisick, and infinite others; most whereof are free to all: so that the artificer printer,

growing every daye more and more unable to provide letter and other furniture, requisite for any good worke; or to gyve mayntenance to any such learned Correctours as are behovefull, will in time be an occasion of great discredit to the professours of the arte, and in myne opinion prejudiciall to the common wealth. . . . I speake not this (though it be very true) as wishing any restraynt to Bookesellers, or Bookebinders, but that they may print, and have printed for them such good bookes as they can orderly procure: for even some of them, though their skill be little or nothing in the execution of the art, have more judgement to governe, and order matters of printing, than some Printers themselves: But unless some few printers be well mayntayned it will bring both the one and the other to confusion and extreme povertie.¹

Let us give Master Barker his due for writing thus honestly and manfully; for, when all is said and done, he cannot be blamed for looking after his own interests, and his treatment of the pirates, as he now regarded his old associates, is not ungenerous. A whole volume could be filled with the tangled story of this Elizabethan book war, but we are compelled merely to glance at it in passing. The prime mover in the revolt was John Wolfe, a printer from the Fishmongers' Company, who openly defied the authorities, and twice went to prison for his pains. He still declared that he could and would print any lawful book, in spite of any commandment of the Queen to the contrary. "'Tush", said he', to quote from the reports of the Stationers' Company on the subject,² "'Luther was but one man, and reformed all the world for religion, and I am that one man, yet must and will reform the government in this trade"'. Wolfe, it is also stated, 'hath oftentimes delivered most disloyal and unreverent speeches of her majesty's government, not once giving her highness any honourable name or title, as "She is deceived", "she shall know she is deceived", also "she is blindly led, she is deceived"'. The end of it all was a special commission and a compromise in which the monopolists, at the beginning of 1584, yielded a number of their copyrights for the benefit of their poorer brethren—John Day, most liberal of them all, surrendering as many as thirty-six, including Ascham's *Scholemaster*—and John

¹ Arber's *Registers of the Stationers' Company*, vol. i.

² *Ibid.*, vol. ii.

Wolfe, having 'acknowledged his error, was relieved with work'.¹ But this was not quite the end, for while the printers and book-sellers were thus quarrelling among themselves, the Crown seized the opportunity still further to tighten its hold on the trade.

Two days after the monopolists made their concession to the insurgents the authorities, as if to illustrate their proclamations against prohibited books with an object-lesson which would not be forgotten, condemned the Catholic printer William Carter for treason, and on the following day had him hanged, disembowelled, and quartered at Tyburn. This was the time, it must be remembered, when Mary Stuart's supporters were plotting against Elizabeth's life. The authorities had reason to be on their guard against such men as Carter, who had already been in prison 'for printinge of lewde pamphlets', and only three years previously had been traced by Bishop Aylmer as the publisher, 'amongst other nawghtye papystycall books', of one written in French on *The Innocency of the Scottish Queen, who was then a prisoner for laying claim to the crown of England and endeavouring to raise a rebellion*—'a very dangerous book', adds Aylmer, in his letter to Burghley on the subject. Carter for some reason was not prosecuted on that occasion, which perhaps explains his rashness in issuing the book which cost him his life—Gregory Martin's *Treatise of Schism*, alleged to contain a veiled incitement to Catholic gentlemen at Elizabeth's Court to assassinate the Queen. Carter denied that the offending passage had any such meaning, but his denial proved of no avail.

Earlier in Elizabeth's reign, as may be seen in Arber's *Transcript*, the Queen had occasion to issue numerous proclamations against seditious books other than those to which we have referred. All serve to prove how difficult the authorities found it to prevent the determined activity of the Romanist press, especially at the time of the rebellion in the North and the other ill-starred endeavours on behalf of Mary Stuart. Later there is similar evidence of trouble with the Puritans, for proclamations were printed showing the stern attempts that were being made to repress certain of their printed books, as well as 'the insolent and inordinate contemptes

¹ Prosperity, as in so many cases of the kind, seems to have altered the point of view of this once doughty champion of liberty, for John Wolfe, who had already been admitted to the Stationers' Company, was afterwards as zealous as anyone in protecting the privileges which now came his way, as well as in routing out secret presses as an official of the company at the time of the Marprelate troubles. He lived to become printer to the City of London, and, after publishing works by Gabriel Harvey, Robert Greene, Thomas Churchyard, and others, died a pattern of respectability.

of such as refuse to come to common prayer and divine service, according to the order established by Parliament'. The most vindictive instance of the Queen's vengeance in this connexion occurred in 1581, in the case of the hot-headed Puritan John Stubbs, benchman of Lincoln's Inn, and William Page, his bookseller, the one for having written and the other for having published the book entitled *The Discovery of a Gaping Gulf, whereunto England is like to be swallowed by another French marriage, if the Lord forbid not the banes by letting her Majestie see the sin and punishment thereof*. Among other indiscretions, the hapless Stubbs had protested against this 'imp of the crown of France' venturing to pay Elizabeth a personal visit incognito—which he stoutly denounced as 'An unmanlike, unprince-like, French kind of wooing'.

The punishments threatened under her own proclamations were not sufficient to appease Elizabeth's wrath in this case, so she fell back on one of the more violent acts of Philip and Mary, and both author and publisher were condemned to suffer the loss of their right hands, which were accordingly chopped off with a butcher's knife and mallet in the market-place at Westminster. Stubbs redeemed this brutal business by a remarkable display of fortitude and loyalty. 'I remember', says Camden, 'standing by Stubbs, who, as soon as his right hand was off, took off his hat with his left, and cried aloud, "God save the Queen!"' The next moment he fainted. Yet even this display of dauntless courage and devotion did not save him from the additional miseries of a long and rigorous imprisonment in the Tower.

Five years later—in June 1586—the Star Chamber strengthened its control of the press by a decree which consolidated and extended its powers defined in the earlier proclamations, and remained in force until the Star Chamber of Charles I superseded it in 1637 by an injunction which, while it lasted, was even more peremptory and strict. For all their threatening enactments the authorities found it as impossible as ever to stop the flow of prohibited books, their chief trouble now being the growth of the Puritan movement against Elizabeth's official episcopacy. Whitgift's high-handed policy was not calculated to extinguish the smouldering fire of dissent. Persecution has ever been but the means of adding fuel to the flames of religious controversy in this country. One result of Whitgift's hard, uncompromising rule was the fierce war of words known as the Martin Marprelate controversy, which raged at its

hottest about 1589. Unable openly to publish their opinions, the Elizabethan Puritans had recourse to the customary means of secret presses and the mysterious machinery which always seemed ready at hand to scatter forbidden literature all over the land, no matter to which side it belonged, the Church of Rome, the Church of England, or the Nonconformists.

It is no part of our purpose to relate in detail how these Puritan zealots, led by the young Cambridge graduate John Penry (afterwards hanged), spread broadcast the violently worded and often scurrilous pamphlets which appeared under the one pseudonym of 'Martin Marprelate'. We need only refer to the controversy as showing the difficulty experienced by Elizabeth's Government in repressing the illegitimate publishing which went on throughout her reign. Whitgift, who was attacked with a fury of invective which exceeded the bounds even of Tudor decency in matters of this kind, did his best to stop the slanders, personally organising the search for the hidden presses which were distributed over various parts of the country, but without meeting with much success. There were always sympathisers ready to cover up the tracks of the offenders. The 'Anti-Martinists', as they were called, who included among their champions John Lyly and Thomas Nash, were more successful in carrying the campaign into the enemy's camp by means of counter-attacks. It was only when both sides were worn out with their exertions that the end came in sight—to quote the wise words of Bacon in his *Advertisement touching the controversies of the Church of England* (1590)—'of this immodest and deformed manner of writing lately entertained, whereby matters of religion are handled in the manner of the stage'.

It is a relief to turn from all this turmoil of religion to the birth of the Golden Age of English literature—to watch it as far as possible from the bookshops of the men who were destined to play the midwife's part in ushering it into the world. Much of their work was unauthorised or unworthily done. But this was not altogether the booksellers' fault, as we hope presently to show; and some of the men who mounted to fame on the shoulders of the great Elizabethans were honourable enough according to their lights. The fine record of William Ponsonby is a case in point. Ponsonby, who was admitted to the Stationers' Company in 1571, started in business for himself in St. Paul's Churchyard, at the sign of the Bishop's Head—close by the shop of Gabriel Cawood (son

and successor of John Cawood, the royal printer), who there published, in 1578, the first English novel of contemporary life, Lyly's *Euphues*.

Perhaps Ponsonby had the success of *Euphues* in his mind when, eight years later, he sought permission from Sidney's old Oxford friend, Sir Fulke Greville, to publish Sir Philip's *Arcadia*, already well known by its wide circulation in manuscript copies. *Euphues*, with its marked originality of style and purpose, had received an enthusiastic welcome from the cultured classes of England, each part running into four or five editions in the first three years, and maintaining a steady sale for many years afterwards. 'Sir', wrote Fulke Greville to Sidney's father-in-law, Sir Francis Walsingham, in a letter endorsed November 1586—only a month after Sir Philip's death at Zutphen—'this day one Ponsonby, bookebynder in pole's churchyard came to me and told me that there was one in hand to print Sir Philip Sidney's old *Arcadia*, asking me if it were done with your honour's consent, or any other of his frendes. I told him, to my knowledge, no; then he advysed me to give warninge of it, either to the Archbishope or Doctor Cosen, who have, as he says, a copy to peruse to that end.'¹ The letter proceeds to suggest that 'some deliberation' would be advisable before publishing Sidney's book, but adds: 'Gayn ther wilbe, no doubt, to be disposed by you: let it be to the poorest of his servants: I desyre only care to be had of his honour, who, I fear, hath carried the honour of these latter ages with him.'

Sidney's relations appear to have shown some reluctance in thus giving the *Arcadia* to the world, but Ponsonby eventually received their permission, and entered the work in the Stationers' Register on 23rd August 1588, his 'copy' being 'authorised under the Archbishop of Canterbury's hand'. The first edition did not appear until 1590, and was not even then an accurate text. In 1593 another edition appeared, 'augmented and ended', and five years later, by arrangement with the same publisher, the whole was revised by Sidney's sister, the Countess of Pembroke, who also added Sir Philip's *Apologie for Poetrie*, the Sonnets, and *Astrophel and Stella*. Ponsonby has a higher claim to fame as the publisher of *The Faerie Queene*. Probably the close and tender friendship which had existed between Sidney and Spenser had something to do with the

¹ Printed by Dr. Grosart in the introductory essay to his edition of the poet's works, 1877.

more illustrious connexion, but, however that may be, Spenser published all his works, with the exception of *The Shepherd's Calendar*, through the same bookseller. *The Shepherd's Calendar* had been issued years before (in 1579) by Hugh Singleton, 'dwelling in Creede Lane, near unto Ludgate, at the signe of the Gylden Tunne', and after being assigned by him in the following year to John Harrison the younger, of Paternoster Row, passed through five editions in the poet's lifetime. Ponsonby entered *The Faerie Queene* (Books I-III) in the Stationers' Register on 1st December 1589, Spenser having entrusted him with the manuscript on his arrival in London from Ireland in the previous month. Sidney's *Arcadia* was then passing through the press, and both works appeared in the following year.

Disappointed in the hope of preferment which had brought him back to Court—though Elizabeth, to whom the work had been dedicated, loosened her purse-strings to the extent of a pension in his favour of £50 a year—Spenser returned reluctantly not long afterwards to his lonely home at Kilcolman Castle. The poet's reputation now encouraged his publisher to collect his minor verse, which he issued under the title of *Complaints, containinge sundrie small poems of the world's vanity*, prefaced with Ponsonby's own address to the reader, to the following effect: 'Since my late setting foorth of the Faerie Queene, finding that it hath found a favourable passage amongst you; I have sithence endeavoured by all good means (for the better encrease and accomplishment of your delights) to get into my handes such small Poems of the same author's as I heard were disperst abroad in sundrie hands; and not easie to bee come by, by himselfe, some of them havinge bene diverslie imbeziled, and purloyned from him, since his departure over sea.' The publisher proceeds to hold out a promise of a further collection of lost or scattered pieces, 'when I can either by himselfe or otherwise attaine to . . . in the meane time praying you gentlie to accept of these, and graciouslie to entertaine the *new Poet*'.¹ The pieces promised in this letter, however, were never recovered; but in 1594 Spenser sent Ponsonby for publication his sonnets *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion*, which Ponsonby entered in the Stationers' Register on 19th November that year, and issued in 1595 with a dedication to Sir Robert Needham. 'To gratulate', to quote the publisher's words,

¹ The name which had been applied to Spenser on the publication of *The Shepherd's Calendar*.

'your safe return from Ireland I had nothing so ready, nor thought anything so meet, as these sweete and conceited sonnets, the deede of that wel-deserving gentleman, maister Edmonde Spenser; whose name sufficiently warranting the worthinesse of the work, I do more confidently presume to publish in his absence.'

Spenser's later works were all issued by the same publisher, who also had the distinction of bringing into the world, among other notable books, Greene's *Mamillia*, and Bedingfield's translation of Machiavelli's *Florentine History*. Ponsonby was warden of his company in 1597-8. He figures for the last time in the Stationers' Register on 5th July 1604, as one of the publishers of a new edition of Sir Thomas North's translation of Plutarch's *Lives*—the chief source of Shakespeare's classical learning. This was first published in 1579 by Thomas Vautrouiller and John Wright, and was one of the best-read books of the age.

Several of the privileged men were enterprising and public-spirited enough not only to invest some of their profits in learned and costly works which must have involved no inconsiderable risk, but to suggest books themselves and engage authors to write them. 'It was at the expense of Christopher Barker', writes H. G. Aldis in the *Cambridge History of English Literature*,¹ 'that George Turberville undertook the compilation of *The Noble Arte of Venerie or Hunting* (1575), the publisher himself seeking out and procuring works of foreign writers for the use of the compiler. When William Fulke was at work upon his *Confutation of the Rhenish Testament*, he and two of his men, with their horses, were maintained in London for three-quarters of a year by the publisher of the book, George Bishop, who also supplied Fulke with such books as he required, and at the finish paid him forty pounds for his work.'

Fulke was luckier than most writers of his day. For the book-sellers, having now got the upper hand of the printers, gradually drew the professional authors into their power. The day was rapidly passing when authors wrote only for the love of the thing, or because they could not help it—when they could say with Alvan, of *The Tragic Comedians*, 'My pen is my fountain—the key of me; and I give myself, I do not sell; I write when I have matter in me and in the direction it presses for, otherwise, not one word!' Men of letters, who were also men of fashion, long continued to hold

¹ Vol. iv, H. G. Aldis's chapter on 'The Book Trade, 1557-1625', an illuminating account of a very obscure period.

themselves aloof from any commercial dealings with their publishers, but writing was gradually becoming a none too creditable trade. Men could now be lured for a miserable pittance to turn out anything, from one of those noble translations which formed such a feature of the Elizabethan book trade, to controversial pamphlets, or street ballads, the last of which came from the press in quantities so vast that one publisher who specialised in these sheets—Richard Jones—entered in the Stationers' Register in 1586 no fewer than 123 at one time. John Stow, the most accurate historian of his age, told Manningham the diarist that he 'made no gains by his travails'. It is true that he received £3 and forty copies for his great *Survey of London*, published by John Wolfe in 1598, and that 'for his pains in the *Brief Chronicle*' he was paid twenty shillings and fifty copies, but these were humiliating returns for labours in which he had spent not only the best part of his life, but all his little fortune.¹ Let us not forget, however, that James I rewarded him in 1604 with a beggar's licence—in other words, with royal letters patent authorising him to appeal for 'kind gratuities'! He seems to have set up basins for alms in the streets, but, fortunately, did not long survive his Majesty's magnanimity.

¹ Stow's *Annals* first appeared in 1588, 'published by R. Newberie at the assignment of H. Bynneman'—who were both well known in the Elizabethan book trade. Ralph Newberie, or Newbery, as it is generally spelt, issued many important works between 1560 and his retirement in 1605, including Barnabe Googe's *Eclogues* and Hakluyt's *Voyages*. Henry Bynneman printed mainly for other stationers, and his name is frequently met with in the considerable undertakings of his day, sometimes in association with other printers.

CHAPTER 5

SHAKESPEARE'S PUBLISHERS

MEANWHILE the first fruits were being gathered of the Golden Age of our dramatic literature, mainly by men who, according to modern ideas, had little right to the harvest. The privileged booksellers, if not content merely with fat monopolies, were too busy with weightier undertakings to bother their heads about the chance plays of contemporary dramatists. It was left to their less fortunate brethren to search the byways as well as the highways for new manuscripts that seemed likely to make 'vendible copies', and thus bring a little grist to their mill. So that these served their purpose it mattered little to the printer or bookseller how the 'copies' found their way into his hands. If he thought of author's rights at all it was but to remember that the author himself was only too well aware of their non-existence—indeed, the very idea of author's copyright was regarded in some high quarters as prejudicial to the public interest—and with a shrug of the shoulders he could well afford to dismiss such a trivial matter from his mind. A pirate, if you like, but it was an age of buccaneering; and let us, in denouncing him as a mere unprincipled money-seeking bookseller, remember not only that he was so hedged about with monopolies and privileges that it was extremely difficult for him to make a living in a more legitimate way, but also that, for the very same reason, he all unwittingly performed services to literature the value of which it is now impossible to over-estimate. For it is to the unprivileged and often piratical bookseller that we owe the preservation in print of the greater part of the dramatic work of the reigns of Elizabeth and James I, and much of the poetical and popular literature as well.

It was a pirate who, in the year 1594, first paid Shakespeare the compliment of publishing one of his plays. The pirate was John Danter, the play *Titus Andronicus*—much of which is attributed to Kyd as well as to Shakespeare—and it was published jointly by Edward White and Thomas Millington. Three years later Danter followed this up with his surreptitious first edition of *Romeo and Juliet*, printed in quarto from an imperfect copy, and published

anonymously. A more ignoble beginning to a series destined to immortality could scarcely be imagined. 'Danter the Printer' was notorious as a dealer in disreputable literature, being introduced as such in the satirical play *The Return from Parnassus*, publicly acted about 1601 at St. John's, Cambridge—'that most famous and fortunate Nurse of all learning', as Nash wrote of it in 1589. Danter was thus probably the first printer or bookseller to be impersonated under his own name in English drama, though Ben Jonson has a reference to 'Master John Trundle', the publisher of ballads, in his *Every Man in his Humour*, which was first produced, with Shakespeare among the players, in 1598. It was this same Trundle who, in 1603, published, with Nicholas Ling, the first quarto of *Hamlet* (see p. 86).

Danter was also the publisher of Nash's attacks on Gabriel Harvey, the most scurrilous of whose tracts, *Have with you to Saffron Walden*,¹ appeared in the year before his surreptitious editions of *Romeo and Juliet*. Hence Harvey's contemptuous reference to Nash as 'Danter's man'. It was in *Have with you to Saffron Walden* that Nash himself admitted, in defence of some of his more shameless productions, that he had been forced by poverty and 'in hope of gain' to write *Amorous Villanellos and Quipassas* for 'new-fangled Galiardos and senior Fantastics'.

To the reading public Shakespeare was known as a poet before his plays began to issue from the press, though he made his name first of all in his double rôle of actor-dramatist. He was more fortunate in the printer of his two narrative poems, *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*, the first of which appeared in 1593 and the second in 1594. This printer was his fellow townsman—and, it is assumed, his personal friend—Richard Field, who left Stratford in 1579 and served his apprenticeship in London with Thomas Vautrollier,² in due course marrying his master's widow and succeeding to the business in 1590. Blades once suggested that when Shakespeare drifted to London in 1586 Field found temporary work for him in Vautrollier's office, but this theory is discredited. Shakespeare's poems attracted far greater attention than his plays. *Venus and Adonis*, which appears, from its unusual accuracy, to have been

¹ Where Gabriel Harvey was then living.

² Thomas Vautrollier was a Huguenot refugee and an excellent printer. He made two attempts to establish a bookselling business in Edinburgh, but does not seem to have met with much success. He finally returned in 1586 with John Knox's *History of the Reformation* in manuscript, but his impression of that work was suppressed.

printed from the author's own manuscript, ran into seven editions in the first eight years, while *Lucrece* reached a fourth edition in the poet's lifetime. A fifth edition of *Lucrece* was published in 1616—the year of Shakespeare's death—by Roger Jackson, who issued it, with the poet's name, as 'newly revised'. This, however, was only one of the tricks of the trade, the text being inferior to the earlier editions.

It was not long after the first appearance of *Venus and Adonis*—the Christmas of 1594—that Shakespeare received his summons to act at Court with other leading players—Elizabeth, like James I, becoming an open admirer of his genius. Sir Sidney Lee suggests that Shakespeare's friendly relations with Field may have secured him some part of the profits in the large sale of the poems; but if that were so, it is strange that Shakespeare should apparently have been content with literary earnings from these narrative poems alone. Is it possible that he came to regard all such dealings with booksellers as beneath his dignity? It is worth remembering that it was just after his first return to Stratford-on-Avon in 1597—to raise the prestige of his family and to buy New Place, the largest house thereabouts—that his father, it is presumed at the poet's instigation, made his original application for a coat of arms, and that henceforth William Shakespeare was formally described as 'of Stratford on Avon, gentleman'.

Shakespeare knew well enough that no one in those days could hope to take rank as a man of fashion if he condescended to strike a bargain with any publisher or bookseller. Sir Philip Sidney would not allow any of his books to be printed during his lifetime; and, as Professor Pollard remarks in his bibliographical study of the 'Shakespeare Folios and Quartos', to have offered Sidney money for his *Defence of Poetrie* or his *Astrophel and Stella*, 'would have been to run a serious risk of being thrown downstairs'. Our suggestion that Shakespeare may have adopted similar views is only worth considering on the assumption that Shakespeare was something of a snob, or rather, a natural aristocrat, with—as we can see from his plays—a great contempt for the proletariat. In any case it is a remarkable fact that not only were all his plays published without the slightest sign of interest on his part, but his *Sonnets* as well, which had been circulated in manuscript for at least eleven years before their unauthorised publication in 1609. The plays might be accounted for by the fact that it was then customary for dramatists

to sell their works outright to one or other company of players, and to realise that they had no further right in them; but this does not hold good in the case of the *Sonnets*. Nor is there any record of a single word of protest when the worst freebooters of the press went so far as to publish seven worthless dramas with Shakespeare's name or initials fraudulently attached as author.

Obviously he had now become a valuable asset in any of these sixpenny ventures—for that was the usual price at which a new quarto of this character was published: a price equal to something like four or five shillings at the present time. Yet, apart from one protest to which reference will presently be made, he seems to have treated everything respecting the publication of his works with an indifference which almost amounted to contempt. Some of the quartos were shamefully produced, not only in their general make-up, but in the all-important matter of textual accuracy. It seems incredible that Shakespeare did not see the printed editions of his sixteen plays published during his lifetime, or that, having seen them, he did not take some steps to ensure that they were at least accurately printed.

He was fond of litigation, and even in the absence of any legal right as author of the plays, it would not have been impossible, with the powerful influence which he could bring to bear upon the Stationers' Company, to call the pirate publishers to book. Was not the patron of his company the Lord Chamberlain himself? It might have been a troublesome business, but, as Professor Pollard points out, injured authors were not without means of obtaining redress in the shape of a fine or imprisonment through the Stationers' Company. And that the Company itself was not always ready to license a play merely on the production of the sixpenny fee is clearly shown by such entries as those in which James Roberts, for example, in 1598, was credited with the 'copy' of *The Merchant of Venice* only on condition that the book was not to be printed by the said 'James Roberts, or anye other whatsoever, without lycence first obtained from the Right Honorable the Lord Chamberlain'; and again in 1603, when he received permission to print *Troilus and Cressida* only 'when he hath gotten sufficient authoritie for yt' (see p. 86).

The out-and-out pirates rarely ran this risk of refusal, preferring to take their chance of a fine or imprisonment to seeking anyone's authority. This was not invariably the rule, however, in

Shakespeare's case; but that the pirates regarded him as fair game, and unlikely to retaliate, is suggested by the cool manner in which Thomas Thorpe, the publisher of the *Sonnets*, both in the Stationers' Register and on the title-page of the book itself, brusquely designated the work *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, instead of following, as Sidney Lee observes, 'the more urbane collocation of words invariably adopted by living authors, viz. *Sonnets of William Shakespeare*'. The one protest of which we have any record survives in Thomas Heywood's *Apology for Actors*—issued in 1612—wherein he tells us that Shakespeare resented the unwarranted use of his name by William Jaggard in 1599, when that worthy issued, under the title of *The Passionate Pilgrim*, by *W. Shakespeare*, an unauthorised collection of scattered verse, the bulk of which was not by Shakespeare at all. Among the contents, however, were two of the *Sonnets* which subsequently appeared in the complete, but still surreptitious, edition of the poems. Heywood was treated in similar fashion by the same publisher in a later edition of *The Passionate Pilgrim*, and airs his grievance in his dedicatory epistle. He knew, he added, in referring to Shakespeare, that he was 'much offended with Mr. Jaggard that (altogether unknown to him) presumed to make so bold with his name'. It was perhaps as a result of this objection that Shakespeare's name was removed from the title-page of some of the copies.

Sir Sidney Lee, according to Professor Pollard, had pirates on the brain, regarding practically all the printers and publishers of Shakespeare's day as tarred with the same brush, and equally dishonest. Pollard is so eager to whitewash their characters that he goes to the other extreme, holding that the amount of wrong done to professional authors was much less than might have been expected, and that piracy was the exception rather than the rule. Nevertheless he makes out a strong case for the legality of most of the Shakespearean quartos, his evidence seeming to prove that 'good' copies are found in the plays duly entered in the Stationers' Register, and that these were obtained by the publishers from their lawful owners, the playhouse authorities to whom the manuscripts had been sold by Shakespeare himself. The pirated editions—those not entered in the Register—he writes, 'were few and clearly distinguishable from the honest ones, and they have left no trace whatever on our present texts'.¹ The whole question is of great importance in any critical consideration of Shakespeare's

¹ *Shakespeare Folios and Quartos*, 1909.

plays, but too controversial and involved to be discussed at length in the space at our disposal.

Thomas Thorpe, who first issued the complete collection of the *Sonnets* in 1609, belonged to a bookselling class plentifully represented among Shakespeare's publishers—a class which picked up its living largely by the procuring of manuscripts for the press. Its members were not over-scrupulous as to the means employed to achieve their purpose. If the playhouse managers objected to the publishing of their plays, or demanded too high a fee, needy actors could be bribed to lend or sell their written copies; or, failing that, shorthand writers could be sent to take the piece down as well as they could. That *Romeo and Juliet* was first printed from a copy obtained, wholly or in part, by this last-named means can hardly be doubted, according to Pollard, who also ascribes to a similar origin the first and imperfect editions of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (published in 1602 by Arthur Johnson 'at the sign of the Fleur de Luce' in St. Paul's Churchyard) and *Pericles* (published by Henry Gosson 'at the sign of the Sunne in Pater-noster Row' in 1609). Heywood complains in the prologue to his play of *Queen Elizabeth*, which had been published surreptitiously for the first time in 1605:

That some by stenography drew

The plot: put it in print: (scarce one word trew:)

and so compelled him to prepare a corrected text for the revival of 1637. Heywood is also our authority for knowing that some dramatists at least sold their plays to publishers as well as to the playhouse managers, though the practice was evidently regarded as double-dealing of a somewhat shady character. The reference is in the preface to Heywood's *Rape of Lucrece* (published by Nathaniel Butter in 1630), when he speaks of playwrights who incur great 'suspition of honestie' by arranging 'a double sale of their labours, first to the stage, and after to the Presse'—a thing which he prides himself on never having done. Some of his plays, unknown to him, had found their way into the printer's hands, and were so corrupt and mangled that he had been 'as unable to know them as ashamed to challenge them'. In the case of *The Rape of Lucrece*, therefore, he had obtained the consent of the stage authorities to furnish it out in its native habit, 'because the rest have been so wronged in being publisht in such savadge and rugged ornaments'.

Thorpe was probably not worse than many others of his kind. He was less fortunate than most, for whereas the majority of these men only employed such means as stepping-stones to more dignified positions in the trade, Thorpe, apparently, began and ended his career as a sort of homeless publisher, though for one brief period, in 1608, he blossomed forth with a shop of his own, at the sign of the Tiger's Head, in St. Paul's Churchyard. Apart from the three books which he is known to have issued from this address—one of them being George Chapman's *Conspiracie and Tragedie of Charles Duke of Byron* and another Ben Jonson's *Masques of Blackness and Beauty*¹—the whole of the books with which he was associated were printed and sold for him by other stationers. His first literary prize was Marlowe's *Lucan*, a manuscript copy of which fell into his predatory hands in 1600. He dedicated the first edition to his friend Edward Blount, who, two years previously, had himself come into possession of Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, and, being but a stationer's assistant at the time, had issued it through other members of the trade. Blount, whose later career is dealt with on pp. 86–8, declared in his preface to *Hero and Leander* that he published it out of respect for Marlowe, whose intimate friendship he claimed, and whose memory he defended against the attacks of his detractors.

When Thorpe published the first edition of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, he had given up his shop at the sign of the Tiger's Head, and, after getting the printing done by George Eld, arranged for the sale of the copies with two other stationers—William Aspley and John Wright. Having entered the copy in the Stationers' Register, and thus proclaimed himself proprietor of the work, he asserted his right by inditing the dedication which has led to so much discussion:

To the onlie begetter of these insuing sonnets, Mr. H. W., all happinesse and that eternitie promised by our ever living poet, wisheth the well-wishing adventurer in setting forth. T. T.

Sir Sidney Lee settles this perplexing phrase almost conclusively in his life of Shakespeare. The mysterious 'Mr. W. H.' did not, as so many students had previously assumed, indicate the initials of the sonnet's youthful hero, but were merely those of Thorpe's partner in the speculation. 'He is best identified', says Sir Sidney,

¹ Thorpe succeeded in publishing four of Ben Jonson's works altogether and three of Chapman's.

'with a stationer's assistant, William Hall, who was professionally engaged, like Thorpe, in procuring "copy". In 1606 "W. H." won a conspicuous success in that direction, and conducted his operations under cover of the now familiar initials. In that year "W. H." announced that he had procured a neglected manuscript poem—*A Foure-fould Meditation*—by the Jesuit Robert Southwell, who had been executed in 1595, and he published it with a dedication (signed "W. H.") vaunting his good fortune in meeting with such treasure-trove. When Thorpe dubbed "Mr. W. H." with characteristic magniloquence "the onlie begetter [*i.e.* obtainer or procurer] of these insuing sonnets", he merely indicated that that personage was the first of the pirate-publisher fraternity to procure a manuscript of Shakespeare's sonnets and recommend its surreptitious use.' Thorpe's venture was the only edition of the *Sonnets* published in the poet's lifetime. We have already seen that his two narrative poems had been frequently reissued during the same period; and most of his published plays were reprinted before his death, six of them running into three and four editions, and two of them (*Richard III* and the first part of *Henry IV*) into as many as five.

The circumstances surrounding the origin of each of these quartos are of the deepest interest, but any serious attempt to discuss them here would not only carry us outside the scope of our inquiry, but bring us at once to debatable matters upon which the most distinguished critics have agreed emphatically to differ.

One of the more substantial of Shakespeare's early booksellers was James Roberts, who, unlike most of the play publishers, was something of a monopolist, holding the patent with R. Watkins to print almanacks and prognostications,¹ which, in the complaint of the unprivileged, 'were the onelie relief of the most porest of ye printers', besides taking over in 1594 a number of theological and other copyrights which had belonged to John Charlewood, whose widow he seems to have married not long afterwards. For nearly twenty years Roberts also held the privilege of printing and publishing the 'players' bills', or programmes, and in this way must have enjoyed exceptional opportunities of picking up manuscript copies of Shakespeare's plays from the managers and actors. In 1600—if we are to believe the title-pages—he printed the quarto

¹ The patent lasted until the end of Elizabeth's reign, James I handing over the privilege to the Stationers' Company and the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. After lasting for nearly two centuries the monopoly was broken down by Thomas Carman, a London bookseller (*see* pp. 189-90).

editions of *The Merchant of Venice* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, as well as the second edition of *Titus Andronicus*; and, four years later, the complete quarto of *Hamlet*. At one time he was held responsible for the printing of the mutilated first quarto of *Hamlet*, but later researches have led to its being assigned to the press of Valentine Simmes, who also printed the first quartos of *Richard II*, *Richard III*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, and the second part of *Henry IV*. Only the publishers' names—Nicholas Ling and John Trundle—appear on the title-page of the first edition of *Hamlet*.

Roberts figures as publisher, as well as printer, of the first edition of *The Merchant of Venice*, but in the other quartos with which he is associated he appears for the most part as printer only. He was associated with other notable works besides Shakespearean quartos, including Marston's *Metamorphosis of Pigmalion's Image* (published by Edmund Matts in 1598), and *The Scourge of Villanie*, by the same dramatist, in the following year; Jervis Markham's *Tragedie of Sir Richard Grinvile* (1595); Turberville's *Songs and Sonnets*, and a new edition of *Euphues*. In 1603 he nearly added *Troilus and Cressida* to his list, for the licence, as stated on p. 81, was made out in his name in that year, but the players in this case seem to have exercised their right to intervene, for nothing came of it. In or about 1608 Roberts's printing business was transferred to William Jaggard, who had a bookselling shop in the churchyard of St. Dunstan's-in-the-West, where he now developed the other branch of his craft, and in 1611 became Printer to the City of London. Roberts's publishing stock, Pollard tells us, was not taken over by him until 1615. The business included the right to print the players' bills—a privilege which Jaggard must have found of the greatest value when the time came to collect the plays of Shakespeare for the famous folio of 1623.

Much of the credit for the First Folio belongs, however, to Edward Blount, who learnt his craft under William Ponsonby, helping him in the great days of his association with Spenser, Robert Greéne, and Sidney's *Arcadia*. Though admitted to the Stationers' Company in 1588—at the end of his ten years' apprenticeship—he did not start publishing on his own account until 1594, but, once established, he soon launched out in a series of enterpriser which ensured him, quite apart from the First Folio, an honourable place in the bookselling annals of his day. He not only

published John Florio's Italian-English Dictionary (issued in 1598 under the title *A World of Words*), but also commissioned him to undertake the English version of one of the noblest of Elizabethan translations, Montaigne's *Essays*. This was published by Blount in 1603, while still content with the modest shop—'little more than an open stall'¹—which he had taken against the great north door of St. Paul's Cathedral in 1594.

With the development of his business Blount was compelled to move, in 1603, to a more substantial house at the sign of the Black Bear, in St. Paul's Churchyard. 'The conditions of the trade', says Sir Sidney Lee, 'did not permit him to contribute substantially—if at all—to the support of authors. But in private life he was honestly interested in literature, and was ambitious of social intercourse with its creators.' Blount published works for Ben Jonson and Daniel, and his connexion with Marlowe we have already touched upon in our references to Thomas Thorpe. His other great ventures before sharing in the production of the First Folio included Thomas Shelton's translation of *Don Quixote*, the first part of which appeared about 1612—while the publisher was in temporary partnership with William Barret—and the second part in 1620. His association with Shakespeare's name began before this with the collection of verse entitled *Love's Martyr; or, Rosalin's Complaint*, which included *A Poetical Essaie on the Turtle and Phœnix*, signed with the poet's name in full. 'Happily', as Sir Sidney Lee remarks in his life of the poet, 'Shakespeare wrote nothing else of like character.'

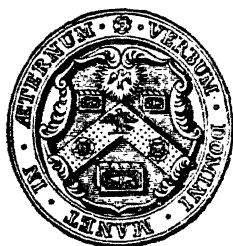
The First Folio was beyond the individual resources of either Blount or Jaggard, so a small syndicate was formed such as became the custom of the trade in later years in most undertakings involving considerable expense. William Jaggard had just retired from active business, but he played a prominent if not the leading part in the preparation of the folio, his connexion with the play-houses doubtless helping considerably. He is probably entitled to divide the chief honours of the enterprise with Blount, who not only took a large share in the financial risk, but is credited with much of the literary and editorial work involved in its production. The three other stationers concerned were Isaac Jaggard, William's son, who had just succeeded him in the printing business, John Smethwicke,

¹ Sir Sidney Lee, in the study of Edward Blount which he contributed under the title 'An Elizabethan Bookseller', to *Bibliographica*, vol. i, 1905.

and William Aspley, the last being one of the two booksellers entrusted by Thomas Thorpe with the sale of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, and joint publisher with Andrew Wise of the first quarto of *Much Ado about Nothing*, and the second part of *Henry iv.* Aspley had also been associated with Blount in several of his earlier undertakings. Smethwicke, who was a neighbour of the Jaggards in St. Dunstan's Churchyard, knew something of Shakespeare's value from two late editions which he had published of *Romeo and Juliet*, as well as one edition of *Hamlet*.

The First Folio came from the press of Isaac Jaggard, and included not only the plays published in Shakespeare's lifetime, as well as the posthumously printed *Othello* (1622), but seventeen other works which had never hitherto been printed. The names of Blount and Isaac Jaggard alone appear as publishers of the book, the colophon stating that it was printed at the expense of William Jaggard, Smethwicke, Aspley, and Blount. The publishers claim on the title-page that the whole thirty-six plays are printed 'according to the true originall copies'. Unimpeachable evidence of former piracy is given in the dedication addressed to the two Herberts—'the incomparable pair of brethren'—the Earls of Pembroke and Montgomery, the first of whom was Lord Chamberlain and patron of the playwright: 'As where you were abus'd with diverse stolne and surreptitious copies, maimed and deformed by the frauds and stealthes of injurious imposters that expos'd them: even those are now offer'd to your view cur'd and perfect in their limbes, and all the rest absolute in their members as he conceived them.' The dedication was written by the two editors, Shakespeare's old friends and brother-players, John Heming and Henry Condell, who protested, probably with truth, that they were actuated in their share of the work 'without ambition either of selfe-profit or fame', and solely with a desire to 'keepe the memory of so worthy a friend and fellow worker alive as was our Shakespeare'. This First Folio, our supreme glory in literature, if not our proudest achievement in the matter of typography, has ensured for its promoters an enduring place in the annals of English publishing. Whatever were their faults as revisers of the press, as Pollard says, they preserved nearly twenty of Shakespeare's plays from total destruction, besides printing greatly improved texts of several others, 'and for these inestimable benefits, had each of the venturers received the whole proceeds of the edition as his share of the profits, who shall say that

they would have been overpaid'? Running into nearly one thousand pages, the First Folio was sold for what was then the high price of twenty shillings—equal to eight or ten pounds of our own money. To-day it may be worth anything up to £14,500, that being the price paid for Lord Rosebery's copy at Sotheby's on 13th June 1933. This was bought by Hogan, of New York; and, it should be added, was re-sold at his sale on 24th April 1946 for the considerably reduced price of \$50,000.



ARMS OF THE STATIONERS'
COMPANY

THROUGH THE REIGN OF JAMES I

THE seventeenth century brings us to a new phase in the history of bookselling. In 1601 Queen Elizabeth, realising that the system of monopolies, which formed so large a part of her whole fiscal policy, was at length rousing her subjects to serious discontent, issued proclamations suspending all privileges of the kind until their legality had been examined and approved by the law officers of the Crown. But however much this may have benefited the book trade for the two remaining years of her life, it was soon nullified by the action of her successor, who expressly excluded books from the provisions of the statute by which monopolies were practically done away with. James not only confirmed individual privileges among the stationers, but permitted the Company itself, while still under strict State control, to become a sort of book trust for its own benefit. C. R. Rivington, who throws some light on this development in his sketch of *The Records of the Worshipful Company of Stationers*, says that there were originally five different trading stocks, called respectively the Ballad Stock, the Bible Stock, the Irish Stock, the Latin Stock, and the English Stock, the Company also holding for some years a patent for printing in Scotland, granted by the Scottish Parliament.

On 29th October 1603, the partners in the English Stock obtained the first of these grants from the new King, which secured to the Company the exclusive right to print all primers and psalters (the King's Printer excepted), as well as all almanacks and prognostications. Other valuable grants followed, and gradually a formidable trade monopoly was set up, the one good thing that could be said for it being that the poorer members of the Company, and the widows of earlier partners, participated in the profits. 'The monopoly long claimed by the Company under these charters', wrote C. R. Rivington in 1883, 'has been swept away now nearly a century, but the English Stock still flourishes, and a considerable annual profit continues to accrue from the publication of almanacks and the "*Gradus ad Parnassum*", the sole survivor of a long list of school-books which formerly issued from Stationers' Hall.' The

monopoly began by the founders of the English Stock buying out the stationers who had held their privileges in Elizabeth's time, 'the which composition, together with a stocke raised by them, coste them great sommes of money'. It then pleased his Majesty (to quote an extract from the State Papers printed by Professor Arber in his introduction to the third volume of his *Transcript*) 'to grante the same unto them for the generale good of the whole Companie. . . . The petitioners have ever since the granting of the said Letters patents yearelie distributed, and by an Ordinance in that behalfe made, are to distribute £200 per Annum for ever, among the poore of the said grante'. The profits from each Stock, apart from these charitable contributions, were divided among the partners according to their individual stake in the concern.

This grant led to long and bitter murmuring among the 'poor Free-men and journeymen printers', who, in a petition to the Lords (printed by Professor Arber), complained that the benefits of the charter, intended for the general good of the whole Company, had, under colour of relieving the poor, been converted to the monopolists in particular, 'and the petitioners utterly ruined thereby'. They prayed that the charter of privilege might be dissolved; but nothing, apparently, came of it.

The partners in the Bible Stock, however, who divided the right of issuing the Scriptures with the King's Printer, played a creditable part in the so-called 'Authorised Version' of the Bible (1611), which originated out of the Hampton Court Conference of 1604. This familiar edition was printed at the expense of Robert Barker, son and successor to Christopher Barker as King's Printer, whose privileges included the right to print not only Bibles and New Testaments, but all Statute Books, as well as Acts of Parliament and proclamations. The King himself, to whom the translators dedicated the work as its 'principal mover and author', paid nothing towards its expenses, the sole remuneration received by the learned divines, apart, of course, from its honour and glory, being 30s. weekly, a sum which each of the seven revisers received from the partners of the Bible Stock in the Stationers' Company during the last nine months of their labours. The Company also provided them with a room at Stationers' Hall, where the work was completed. The owners of the Bible Stock had no reason to complain of their own reward, for Rivington tells us that no fewer than eight auditors were at one time required to examine the

accounts, and that the profits were sufficient to enable the partners to lend money to the Company at six per cent. To-day the copyright of the Authorised Version, as well as the Book of Common Prayer, is vested in the Crown, the right to print them being granted by charter to Oxford and Cambridge Universities, and by licence to the King's Printer. The Revised Version is the joint property of the two Universities, which paid £20,000 towards the expenses of publication.

We are still sadly lacking in information concerning the actual profits and losses of individual members of the trade in the early years of the seventeenth century, though the printer continued to complain that the bookseller—or publisher as we should call him—had matters too much his own way, and secured too many of the prizes. It was certainly easier and less expensive to start simply as a bookseller or publisher, without waiting for permission to set up a printing establishment. The young stationer could begin with a bookstall; and he had only to pick up a manuscript—it did not much matter how—have it entered as his 'copy' in the Stationers' Register, get some one to print it for him if he had no press of his own, and start publishing at once. A half-forgotten book that seemed worth reprinting, or even a ballad, would answer the purpose. The system of interchange which became a recognised practice at once provided him with an opportunity of stocking his booth or shop with other books at comparatively little expense.

That was how John Dunton started his business later in the century, when, as he explains in his *Life and Errors*, by exchanging through the whole trade the first book which he issued, 'it furnished my shop with all sorts of books saleable at that time'. There are references in the Stationers' Registers to show that this was a common practice at the time. Many an apprentice who started in this humble way knew nothing of the printer's craft, having served his time with a bookseller or bookbinder; and having completed his apprenticeship, he was made free of the Stationers' Company whether he could print or not. Books in those early days were usually sold unbound, so that no great outlay was involved on that account, the binding belonging, for the most part, to a distinct branch of the stationer's craft. As the young bookseller prospered so he could extend his business, stocking bound as well as unbound copies, and presently adding to his staff as many hack writers as he condescended to patronise.

With the printers it was different. In the early seventeenth century, and onwards to the time of the Long Parliament, when for a time there was greater freedom, they were handicapped by the Star Chamber Decree of 1586, which limited the number of master printers to twenty-five. That was a liberal allowance in the eyes of the ecclesiastical authorities, fearful as ever of the growing power of the press. Had not Christopher Barker, the Queen's Printer, in his official report of 1582, declared that eight or ten presses at the most 'would suffice for all England, yea, and Scotland too'? Even the twenty-five printing houses, with their fifty odd presses which they boasted between them, were hopelessly insufficient to find promotion or even work for all the increasing number of journeymen and apprentices. Vacancies occurred among the master printers only at rare intervals—to be filled up in each case with the sanction of the Archbishop. Steps were taken to relieve the distress which inevitably ensued by restricting the number of apprentices, and limiting the number of copies of any one edition—except in special cases—to 1250 or 1500 copies, the whole work having to be reset in the event of a reprint being called for.

There was one way, however, as Professor Arber points out, in which the would-be master printer could come to a printing business of his own, independently of the court of assistants and the Archbishop, and that was to marry a master printer's widow. The good apprentice of tradition was wont to marry his master's daughter. In point of fact, in the stationer's case at all events, it was more often his master's widow. 'It must have been a lively time among eligible young printers', remarks Arber, in the introduction to the fifth volume of his *Transcript*, 'when it was known that a master printer was dying.' We meet with more than one widow, in the course of this *Transcript*, who married three printers in succession, carrying her business with her in each case.

The trade still had its headquarters in St. Paul's Churchyard. Paternoster Row did not take its leading place until the days of Queen Anne, after Little Britain had had its reign and, in its turn, been superseded. Meantime the 'Row' was more noted for its mercers, lace-men, haberdashers, and sempstresses than for its publishers, though these began to put in their claims towards the end of the sixteenth century, when we find one or two noted stationers located there. The westward movement started in the

reign of James I, when booksellers' shops sprang up here and there along Holborn, and down the Strand towards Charing Cross. Little Britain came to the front towards the middle of the seventeenth century, when London Bridge also had its spell of bookselling popularity, though one stationer, William Pickering, chiefly remembered as a ballad-monger, had a shop there as early as 1557. 'In the next year', writes H. G. Aldis, in his chapter on 'The Book Trade, 1557-1625', in *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, 'he was "dwellyng at Saynt Magnus Corner"', which, if not actually on the bridge, was at least hard by, and at this address the business continued for upwards of a century. As might be expected from its situation at the port of London, many nautical books were published here, and the seaman making his preparations for a voyage would step into the well-known shop and purchase *The Art of Navigation*, or perhaps, if he were thither bound, a *Card or rutter of the sea lyenge betwene Holland and Ffryseland*, and, were he so minded, he might fortify himself with *The Seamans sacred Safetie or a praier booke for seamen*.'

From the same authority we learn that the Frankfort fair still held so important a place in the English trade that John Bill, one of the leading London stationers, who was patronised by King James, Sir Thomas Bodley, and other distinguished men, thought it worth while in 1617 to begin the issue of a London edition of the half-yearly Frankfort *Mess-Katalog*. This he continued for about eleven years, adding, from 1622 to 1626, a supplement of 'Books printed in English'. This supplement, as H. G. Aldis points out, was not the first attempt at a catalogue of English books. 'The credit for that enterprise is due to Andrew Maunsell, who, induced, one may believe, by a love of books, deserted the calling of a draper to become a bookseller and the earliest English bibliographer.' Maunsell's *First Part of the Catalogue of English printed Bookes* had been issued from his shop in Lothbury in 1595, and was devoted to works of divinity. The second part, which he published in the same year, 'concerneth the science Mathematicall, as Arithmetick, Geometric, Astronomie, Astrologie, Musick, the Arts of Warre and Navigation; and also of Physicks and Surgery', and was to have been followed by a third part dealing with rhetoric, history, poetry, and art, but this, unfortunately, never appeared. Maunsell printed but few books himself, but he was well known as a publisher.

Apart from the evil of monopolies, which remained a very real

grievance among the unprivileged stationers, the trade enjoyed a period of comparative peace during the reign of James I. Whatever his faults and failings as a monarch, James was a genuine scholar, as well as something of an author, and could take a personal interest in the affairs of the Stationers' Company. His *Basilicon Doron* was written in 1599, but the first edition was not published until shortly before his accession to the English throne, when it was issued in Edinburgh by the King's Scottish printer, Richard Waldegrave. Copies evidently soon found their way to the English capital, for within a week of Elizabeth's death we find it entered in the Stationers' Register—'A booke called *Basilicon*, or his Majestie's instructions to his Dearest sonne Henrie the prince'—as the 'copie' of six London stationers. One of these enterprising booksellers was Master Simon Waterson, who published the last of Camden's great works, the *Annals of the Reign of Elizabeth*, which is entered in the Stationers' Register on 21st March 1615, as '*The History of England in Lattin from the yeare 1558 to the yeare 1588*, licensed to be printed by the Kinge's Maiesties Letter under the Signett directed to Sir Robert Cotton, knight, and Master William Cambden, Clarenceaux'.¹ In November of the following year Waterson entered the *Annals* in an English translation, 'to be printed when it is further authorised', but no English version appeared until 1627, several years after Camden's death.

Francis Bacon, who had just received his knighthood from James, published his *Advancement of Learning* in 1605 through Richard Ockhould, the first part being entered to him on 19th August of that year, and the second part exactly one month later. Ockhould published nothing else worth remembering in the course of his career, and even the *Advancement of Learning* he assigned to one William Washington on 15th January 1629, some two or three years after Bacon's death. There is more interest attaching to the first edition of the famous *Essays*, which Bacon authorised Humphrey Cooper to publish in 1597. Only ten essays went to make up this slim octavo volume, and in his dedication 'to Mr. Anthony Bacon, his deare brother', the author explains his reasons for thus issuing 'these fragments of his conceites'. He publishes them now, he says, 'like some that have an Orchard ill neighbored, that gather their fruit before it is ripe, to prevent stealing', meaning that he is doing

¹ Camden's *Britannica* was published by Ralph Newbery in 1586, and ran through five editions before the end of the century.

so to forestall an unauthorised edition that he knows to be in preparation; 'only I disliked now to put them out because they will bee like the late new halfe-pence, which though the silver were good, yet the peeces were small'. Not to do so 'had been to adventure the wrong they mought receive by untrue coppies, or by some garnishment'.

Sure enough the essays were entered by one of the pirates, Richard Serger, on 24th January 1597, but against the entry is written in the margin of the Register—*cancellatur ista intratio per curiam tentam 7 februarij* (Arber). Twelve days later came the authorised entry in favour of Bacon's publisher, Humphrey Cooper—'A book intituled *Essaies, Religious Meditations, Places of Perswasion and Disswation*'—and the volume itself appeared on 7th February. The *Essays* were immediately successful, Cooper, whose shop was at the sign of the Black Bear, in Chancery Lane, issuing a new edition in 1598. Numerous other reprints, authorised and unauthorised, appeared during the author's lifetime.

Bacon, like Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Thomas Heywood, and other dramatists who linked the great Elizabethan era with Jacobean days, had almost as many different publishers on his title-pages as Shakespeare himself. And, in the same way, many of the works of the playwrights have been preserved to us in print by wholly unauthorised means. Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Pestle*, for example, was published anonymously in 1613 by Walter Burre, who writes in his dedicatory letter to Robert Keysar that he 'had fostered it privately in his besom these two years', adding incidentally that the play was a failure when first produced on the stage. It was a great success upon its revival in 1635. Walter Burre was the bookseller who, in 1614, published the first edition of Sir Walter Raleigh's unfinished *History of the World*, written, as we all know, while the author was in the Tower.

A circumstantial story, but now rejected as apocryphal, of a dramatic interview four years later between Sir Walter Raleigh and his bookseller, is told by Winstanley in his *English Worthies* (1660) and repeated by Aubrey and other antiquarians. 'Some few days before he suffered', so the story runs, 'Sir Walter sent for Mr. Walter Burre, who formerly printed his first volume of the *History of the World*, whom, taking by the hand, after some other discourse, he asked him how it had sold. Mr. Burre returned this answer: "It sold slowly; it had undone him." At which words of his, Sir

Walter, stepping to his desk, reaches his other imprinted part of his history which he had brought down to the times he lived in, and, clapping his hand upon his breast, said with a sigh, "Ah! my friend, hath my first part undone thee? The second part shall undo no more; this ungrateful country is unworthy of it": and immediately going to the fireside, threw it in, and set his foot on it until it was consumed. As great a loss to learning as Christendom could have sustained; the greater because it could be repaired by no other hand but his.' The real fact was that the volume published by Burre was a conspicuous success from the first, two editions being called for in the same year. It is true that James, who had expounded his views in his *Basilicon Doron* as to the divine right of kings, condemned the work—"for divers exceptions", says John Chamberlain, the letter-writer, 'and specially for being too saucy in censuring princes'—but although the Archbishop of Canterbury, at his Majesty's command, ordered the Stationers' Company to suppress all the copies, the publisher appears to have surmounted the difficulty by cancelling the title-page, for the circulation of the book was allowed to continue. It reached another edition before Sir Walter's death, and remained one of the best selling books throughout the seventeenth century.

Two years before Raleigh died Bishop Montague published through the King's printers, Robert Barker and John Bill, the collected works of James himself, though his Majesty was no more popular as an author than as a king. This was in 1616, the year of Shakespeare's death, as well as the less-remembered death of Francis Beaumont. The band of immortals associated with the old convivial gatherings at the *Mermaid*, of which Beaumont wrote so feelingly to Ben Jonson, was fast breaking up. Raleigh, who followed Shakespeare and Beaumont two years later, had himself originated these 'merry meetings' in the more heroic days of Elizabeth. Less than a fortnight after Beaumont's death we find an entry in the Stationers' Register of one of the fifty odd plays that he wrote conjointly with John Fletcher. This was *The Scornful Lady*, entered as the 'copie' of Miles Patriche, by whom it was assigned in the following year to Thomas Jones. It was in 1616, also, that Ben Jonson collected his plays and verses in his First Folio, to which he ventured to give the title of his *Works*, thus bringing down upon his head the scorn of contemporary wits for prostituting that term by such ephemeral things as plays.

The 1616 Folio was prepared for the press by Jonson himself, and issued by William Stansby, one of the most considerable stationers, and certainly one of the best printers, of his day. Stansby fell into serious trouble on one occasion for printing a seditious book, the Stationers' Company punishing him by nailing up his shop, though he was eventually allowed to resume his business. There was not the same demand for Ben Jonson as for Shakespeare, whose First Folio, published seven years later, went to its second edition in 1632,¹ while Ben Jonson's Second Folio, sold in a succession of fragments by Robert Allot, Andrew Croke, Richard Meighen, and H. Herringham, was not completed until 1641.

To Ben Jonson, as to most professional authors of his day, the choice of a patron who would pay for the dedication of his book was even more important than that of a publisher. He succeeded in securing the patronage of James I, who conferred a pension of a hundred marks² a year upon him, and subsequent but more uncertain bounties from Charles I. Jonson sent a characteristic petition to Charles begging that his pension of a hundred marks might be turned into pounds:

Please your majesty to make
Of your grace, for goodness sake,
Those your father's marks, your pounds.

The poet also drew a pension of a hundred nobles as the city of London's chronologer. William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, patron of so many needy writers, used to send Jonson a regular New Year gift of £20 wherewith to purchase books. Another of his more generous supporters was the Duke of Newcastle, to whom Jonson, in his letters, could humble himself in a manner which, though characteristic of the age, is nevertheless distressing to read. 'Your lordship's timely gratuity', he tells the Duke on one occasion, 'fell like the dew of heaven upon my necessities'; and some of his begging letters form pitiful commentaries on the state of authorship in those unprotected days.

But authors were already beginning to rebel against their in-

¹ The Second Folio Shakespeare was printed by Thomas Cotes for John Smethwicke, William Aspley, Richard Hawkins, Richard Meighen, and Robert Allot, each of whose names figures as publisher on different copies. To Allot, whose name is most often met with on the title-page, Blount had transferred, on 16th November 1630, his rights in the sixteen plays which were first licensed for publication in 1623.—LEE.

² The mark was formerly a current coin in England and Scotland, and was equal to about thirteen shillings.

adequate rewards from the book trade itself. John Minshew, the lexicographer, like John Ruskin and other independent authors in more recent times, became his own publisher, printing his *Guide into Tongues* in 1617 at his own charge, and, since the booksellers refused to have anything to do with the work, sold it himself to the subscribers. This was the first book published by subscription in England, but apparently the venture was not very successful.

The case of George Wither, the poet and pamphleteer, is better known. His *Schollers Purgatory* gives the most graphic, if somewhat prejudiced, portraits of contemporary booksellers that we possess. Wither had obtained from James I in 1623 letters patent granting him for a period of fifty-one years not only the monopoly or copyright of his own *Hymns and Songs of the Church*, but an order for their compulsory insertion in every copy of the authorised *Psalm-book in meter*, the privilege of issuing which had been granted to the Stationers' Company by the King at the beginning of his reign. The Stationers' Company at once came to loggerheads with him, and the bitter controversy ensued which the author perpetuated in his *Schollers Purgatory*, published at the time of James's last Parliament. If the Star Chamber, as it did on occasion, chastised the stationers with whips, Wither chastised them with scorpions:

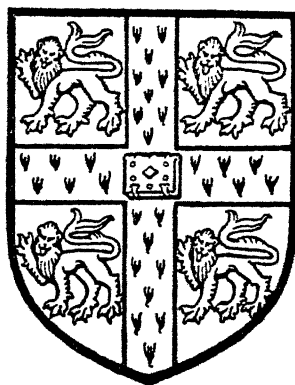
Neverthelesse [he writes], conceive me not, I pray you, that I goe about to lay a general ymputation upon all Stationers. For, to disparage the whole profession, were an act neither becomming an honest man to doe, nor a prudent Auditory to suffer. Their mystery (as they not untruly tearme it) consists of divers Trades incorporated together: as Printers, Booke-binders, Claspemakers, Bookesellers, etc. And of all these be some honest men, who to my knowledge are so greeved being over-born by the notorious oppressions and proceedings of the rest, that they have wished themselves of some other calling. The Printers mystery, is ingenious, paynefull, and profitable; the Booke-binders necessary; the Claspemakers useful. And indeed, the retailer of bookes, commonly called a Booke-seller, is a Trade, which being wel governed, and lyimited within certaine bounds, might become somewhat serviceable to the rest. But as it is now (for the most part abused) the Bookeseller hath not onely made the Printer, the Binder, and the Claspemaker a slave to him: but hath brought Authors, yea the whole Commonwealth, and all the

liberall Sciences into bondage. For he make all professors of Art labour for his profit, at his owne price, and utters it to the Commonwealth in such fashion, and at those rates, which please himselfe.

Wither complains, among other things, of the excessive number of books. It is a complaint which we are familiar with in our own day; and will be heard, probably, to the end of the chapter; for is it not the oldest cry in literature. 'Good God!' writes Wither in 1632, 'how many dungboats full of fruitless works do they yearly foist on his Majesty's subjects; how many hundred reams of foolish, profane, and senseless ballads do they quarterly disperse abroad!' Yet the total number of entries in the Stationers' Register for 1632 does not amount to more than 109—an average of but two a week. This is not a strictly accurate list of the actual number of books published, for many works were issued without being entered, but it is sufficiently striking when we compare it with the totals in recent years, printed on pp. 358 and 360-1.

Wither made good his claim to his monopoly for the time being, but ten years later the council disallowed the offending patent. The Stationers' Company clung to its privileges in no spirit of compromise, whether dealing with refractory authors or provincial printers. The long-standing rivalry between the Londoners and the University stationers, which began in Elizabeth's day, continued intermittently through the reign of James I. Its eventful record is referred to later in our separate history of the University Presses. Timperley quotes an anecdote about the learned Ussher which is said to mark the beginning of the contest between the Stationers' Company and Cambridge University about the right to print Bibles. Ussher 'one day hastening to preach at Paul's Cross, entered the shop of one of the stationers, and inquiring for a Bible of the London edition, when he came to look for his text, to his astonishment and his horror, he discovered that the verse was omitted! This gave the first occasion of complaint to the King of the insufferable negligence and incapacity of the London press'. The best known of many corrupt editions of the Scriptures published in the seventeenth century was that which has so well earned the name of the 'Wicked' Bible, making the seventh commandment read: 'Thou shalt commit adultery.' The omission of the one small but all-important word cost Robert Barker and Martin Lucas,

the King's printers who issued this edition in 1631, a heavy fine, yielding a sum out of which a fount of Greek type and matrices was, at the suggestion of Charles I, bought by Archbishop Laud, and a press for the publishing of special editions in Greek established at Blackfriars. Not many books were issued as a result of this admirable plan, and the press itself does not seem to have survived the shock of the Civil Wars.



SHIELD OF THE CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CHARLES I AND THE COMMONWEALTH

THE story of the book trade through the reign of Charles I is largely a record of restriction and persecution. The plague, which played havoc with the trade at the time of his accession—leaving, as in earlier outbreaks, significant gaps in the Stationers' Register—was a small matter compared with the ecclesiastical tyranny now exercised over the press. Authors and publishers, comparatively speaking, had not had much to complain about in the matter of State control during the preceding reign, but with the predominance of Laud and his party under Charles I they were harassed unmercifully. Most branches of literature were hard put to it to keep their heads above water in the new flood of theological writings, and few stationers, whether they were printers or publishers—or both—escaped a fine or imprisonment. They were not so cruelly used, however, as such authors as Alexander Leighton, the Scottish divine, who, besides being twice whipped and branded, had his ears cut off and his nose slit, and was kept in prison until the Long Parliament released him; or the more celebrated Puritan, William Prynne, whose *Histrio-Mastix*, with its attack on stage plays and acting which was supposed to cast reflections on the morals of the Court—because the Queen herself had recently taken part in a masque!—was published by Michael Sparke in 1632.

Prynne and his publisher were both thrown into prison, together with the two printers of the book, 'W. J.' (William Jones) and 'E. A.', though these last escaped further punishment. Brought up before the Star Chamber in February 1634, Prynne was sentenced to a fine of £5000, to be degraded from the Bar, to stand in the pillory at Westminster and Cheapside, where he was to have one of his ears cropped at each place, and to be imprisoned for life. An eyewitness of his punishment in the pillory at Cheapside says that while he stood there 'they burnt his huge volumes under his nose, which had almost suffocated him'. Sparke had to pay a fine of £500 and to stand in the pillory as well, but this was the extent of his punishment, though he had incensed the authorities and

suffered imprisonment for similar offences on more than one previous occasion. Three years later the irrepressible Prynne found means to publish under a pseudonym the tract, *News from Ipswich*, which cost him his second fine of £5000, together with the renewed degradation of the pillory, the loss of what remained of the stumps of his ears, and, most infamous of all, the mutilation of both cheeks with the letters 'S. L.'—'*Stigmata Laudis*', according to the grim humour of Prynne's own interpretation, though 'seditious' or 'scurrilous libeller' was the official meaning.

Though ostensibly printed at Ipswich, the work was produced in London, John Lilburne being found guilty in February 1637 of printing and publishing this among several seditious books. Lilburne was condemned, says Timperley, to be whipped at the cart's tail to Old Palace Yard, Westminster; then set in the pillory there for two hours; afterwards to be carried back to the Fleet, there to remain until he conformed to the rules of the Court; also to pay a fine of £500 to the King; and, lastly, to give security for his good behaviour. He underwent the sentence with undismayed fortitude, uttering many bold speeches against the bishops, and dispersing pamphlets from the pillory. The Star Chamber thereupon ordered him to be gagged; but, not to be suppressed, he proceeded to stamp with his feet. His rebellious spirit earned for him the name of Freeborn John.

It was in this year of 1637—on 11th July—that the Star Chamber, bent on repressing such obnoxious literature at all hazards, published the drastic decree concerning printing which preceded the darkest age in the history of the English book trade since Caxton set up his press at Westminster. This Act, while confirming existing ordinances, consisted of no fewer than thirty-three additional clauses, the former decrees, it states in its preamble, having 'been found by experience to be defective in some particulars: And divers abuses have sithence arisen, and been practised by the craft and malice of wicked and evil disposed persons, to the prejudice of the publicke; and divers libellous, seditious, and mutinous bookes have beene unduly printed, and other bookes and papers without licence, to the disturbance of the peace of the Church and State'. The number of printers was reduced to twenty-three, including the King's printers and the printers allowed for the Universities; all books had to be licensed according to classification—law books, by the Lord Chief Justice and the Lord Chief Baron; all books of

English history or other books of State affairs, by the principal Secretaries of State; works dealing with heraldry, by the Earl Marshal; and all other books, 'whether of divinitie, phisicke, philosophie, poetrie, or whatsoever, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, or the Chancellors or Vice-Chancellors of Oxford or Cambridge University'.

Every book had still to be entered in the Stationers' Register, and to bear the name of the printer, the author, and the publisher. Native printers, however, were protected by a clause which prohibited the importation of English books printed abroad, and the interests of legitimate booksellers were also studied, in Clause X, with a consideration which would be gratefully received by some members of the book trade to-day: 'That no haberdasher of small wares, ironmonger, chandler, shop-keeper, or any other person or persons whatsoever, not having beene seven yeares apprentice to the trade of a bookseller, printer, or book-binder, shall within the citie or suburbs of London, or in any other corporation, market-towne, or elsewhere, receive, take or buy, to barter, sell againe, change or do away, any Bibles, Testaments, Psalm-books, Primers, Abcees, Almanackes, or other booke or books whatsoever upon pain of forfeiture of all such books so received, bought or taken as aforesaid, and such other punishment of the parties so offending, as by this Court, or the said high Commission Court respectively, as the severall causes shall require, shall be thought meet' (Arber). To ensure good behaviour each of the master printers was bound in sureties of £300, and the penalties for all stationers and others who offended against this or any other decree of the kind included heavy fines, imprisonment, confiscation of stock, and such corporal punishment as a whipping at the cart's tail. One clause which caused a good deal of dissatisfaction was that which required not only first editions, but all reprints to be licensed, though in the case of reprints no fee was charged for registration, and printed copies only had to be submitted for inspection, instead of the two written copies demanded in the case of original works.

The final clause marks an early stage in the evolution of the custom, prevailing at the present day, of sending copies of all new works to the British Museum, and four or five of the leading university libraries in the United Kingdom and Ireland: 'That whereas there is an agreement betwixt Sir Thomas Bodley, Knight, Founder

of the University Library at Oxford, and the Master, Wardens, and Assistants of the Company of Stationers, *viz.* That one Booke of every sort that is new printed, or reprinted with additions, be sent to the University of Oxford, for the use of the publicke Librarie there; the Court doth hereby Order, and declare, that every printer shall reserve one Book new printed, or reprinted by him, with additions, and shall before any publique venting of the said book, bring it to the Common Hall of the Companie of Stationers, and deliver it to the officer thereof to be sent to the Librarie at Oxford accordingly, upon paine of imprisonment, and such further Order and Direction therein, as to this Court, or the high Commission Court respectively, as the severall causes shall require, shall be thought fit' (Arber).

The formidable Decree of 1637 soon lost its effect under the gathering clouds of the Civil Wars, and when the Long Parliament abolished the Star Chamber in 1641 the Act became to all intents and purposes a dead letter. This was not at all to the liking of the Stationers' Company, which was virtually left for the time being not only powerless to act, but in serious danger of losing its privileges. The most law-abiding stationers under the old *régime* began to print and sell both books and pamphlets without troubling either to obtain a licence or to enter them in the Company's Register, which now shows an average of scarcely more than one entry a week. The more lawless members seized the opportunity to trade in books belonging to the monopolists. 'Within these last four years'—to quote from 'The humble Remonstrance of the Company of Stationers' to Parliament in April 1643, eight months after Charles had raised his standard at Nottingham—'the affairs of the Presse have grown very scandalous and enormous, and all redresse is almost impossible, if power be not given by some binding order to reduce Presses and Apprentices to the proportion of those times which did precede these last four years. This is so farre from an Innovation that tis the removall of a dangerous Innovation, and without this removall, the Company of Stationers being like a feeld overpestered with too much stock, must needs grow indigent, and indigence must needs make it run into trespasses, and break out into divers unlawfull shifts; as Cattle use to do, when their pasture begins wholly to fail. Besides the same disorder which undoes Stationers by too great multitude of Presses and Apprentices among themselves, causes also Strangers, as Drapers, Carmen,

and others to break in upon them, and set up Presses in divers obscure corners of the City and suburbs; so that not only the ruine of the Company is the more hastened by it, but also the mischief—which the State suffers by the irregularity of all, is the lesse remediable.’

Among other ‘considerations’ offered in the same document, which fills nearly five pages in Arber’s great *Transcript*, is one modest paragraph of four lines pointing out the present discouragement to authors. ‘Many men’s Studies’, it observes, ‘carry no other profit or recompence with them but the benefit of their copies [copyrights]; and if this be taken away, many Pieces of great worth and excellence will be strangled in the womb, or never conceived at all for the future.’

Parliament, as well as the Stationers’ Company, had already taken alarm at the manner in which authors, printers, and publishers made use of their new-found freedom, and, two months after receiving this Remonstrance, a new Ordinance was passed, ‘to prevent and suppress the license of printing’.

This reactionary Ordinance, inspired by the very Presbyterians who, in other days, had been loudest in protesting against the wickedness of such restraints, had scarcely been issued when Milton’s offending treatise on the *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* was ready for publication. Milton had already treated the earlier Decree with contempt by issuing his Anti-Episcopal pamphlets without leave or licence from anyone. The new Ordinance suffered a similar fate. The idea of any censorship over books, which left the decision as to what should be published, and what suppressed, in the hands of a few men, and these—as he wrote years afterwards—mostly unlearned and of common capacity, filled him with indignation. Disregarding the new Act—knowing indeed that there was little likelihood of persuading any of the new authorities to license the work—he sent forth his Divorce treatise without either official sanction or entry in the Stationers’ Register. The Company at once took action against both this and another unlicensed work, but, though the matter was taken to Parliament, and referred to a Commons Committee on Printing, nothing came of it.

Milton, however, did not intend to let the matter rest there. He took his revenge in the finest piece of prose that he ever wrote, the *Areopagitica*, now one of the leading documents in the history

of the liberty of the press. Seizing the bull by the horns he addressed the *Areopagitica* to Parliament itself, calling it 'A Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing'. It was published in 1644 in his own name, but unlicensed, and without the name of either printer or bookseller—a small quarto breathing throughout its forty pages the author's ennobling love of liberty—'which is the nurse of all great wits'—and letters. 'As good almost kill a man as kill a good book', he writes in a celebrated passage, which reminds us of no one so much as that earlier book-lover, good Master Richard de Bury—'Who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were, in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life.' Milton proceeds to pour out his eloquence on the lessons of the past, carrying them back to Ancient Rome and Athens, and reminding them that 'this authentic Spanish policy of licensing books . . . was the immediate image of a Star Chamber Decree to that purpose made in those times when that Court did the rest of those her pious works, for which she is now fallen from the Stars with Lucifer. . . . It may be doubted', he concludes, shrewdly enough, 'there was in it the fraud of some old patentees and monopolizers in the trade of book-selling; who under pretence of the poor in their Company not to be defrauded, and the just retaining of each man his several copy (which God forbid should be gainsaid) brought divers glossing colours to the house, which were indeed but colours, and serving to no end except it be to increase a superiority over their neighbours.'

Anxious that he should not make his reputation solely as a pamphleteer, Milton, shortly after this, consented to the publication of the first collection of his poems by Humphry Moseley, who issued the edition, revised for the press by Milton himself, on 2nd January 1646.

Moseley had his shop at the sign of the Prince's Arms, in St. Paul's Churchyard, and was the one stationer above all others who stood out conspicuously at that time as a publisher of poetry and the miscellaneous class of literature, leisurely and elegant, politely known as 'belles-lettres'. When we remember how little was issued in pure literature in the troubled days of the mid-seventeenth century, his record in this respect is remarkable. 'By 1646', writes

Dr. Masson, 'Moseley had distinguished himself as the publisher of original editions of books, not only by Howell and Waller, but also by Milton, Davenant, Crashaw, and Shirley, and moreover as the ready purchaser of whatever copyrights were in the market of poems and plays by Beaumont and Fletcher, Webster, Ludwick Carlell, Shirley, Davenant, Killigrew, and other celebrities dead or living. To this group of Moseley's authors Cowley and Cartwright were soon added; and it was not long before he snapped out of the hands of duller men Denham's Poems, Carew's Poems,¹ various things of Sir Kenelm Digby, and every available copyright in any of the plays of Shakespeare, Massinger, Ford, Rowley, Middleton, Tourneur, or any other of the Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists. For at least the ten years from 1644 onwards there was, I should say, no publisher in London comparable to Moseley for tact and enterprise.'

To Dr. Masson's list should be added the works of Sir John Suckling, 'the darling of the Court' of Charles I, the majority of which appeared in print for the first time in the *Fragmenta Aurea*—'published by a friend to perpetuate his memory' in 1646, four years after their author's death. This volume comprised Suckling's poems, his *Letters to Divers Eminent Personages*, and three of his plays, *Brennoralt*, *The Goblins*, and *Auglaura*—the tragi-comedy which the poet had produced in folio form in 1638 with margins so wide, and text so slim, that it provoked the ridicule of the wits, who declared that the type resembled a baby lying in the great bed at Ware. His fourth and unfinished play, *The Sad One*, was published by Moseley in 1659 with a publisher's note to the reader, stating that he thought it better 'to send it into the world in the same state I found it, without the least addition, than procure it supplied by any other pen. . . . I could not have answer'd myself, to the world', he concludes, 'if I had suppressed this tragedy, and therefore may hope for some favour by its publication.'

English literature would have been the poorer for a good many other pieces had it not been for worthy Humphry Moseley. In the same year as that of this first edition of *The Sad One*, he published Suckling's *Last Remains*, having obtained permission to transcribe them for that purpose from the poet's sister, Lady Southcot, in

¹ The first edition of Carew's poems was published by Thomas Walkley, 'at the signe of the Flying Horse, between Brittain's Burse, and York House', in 1640. The second edition came from the same publisher in 1642, with eight additional poems, including one by Waller. Moseley published the third edition, which appeared in 1651.

whose safe keeping they had been left. 'I could tell you', writes our publisher in his characteristic address from *The Stationer to the Reader*, 'what a thirst and general inquiry hath been after what I here present you, by all that have either seen or heard of them. And by that time you have read them, you will believe me, who have, now for many years, annually published the productions of the best wits of our own and foreign nations.'

Milton, to step back a few years, had meantime been swept into the whirlpool of politics as Latin Secretary to the newly appointed Council of State (1649), writing in the same year the best known of his official papers, *Eikonoklastes*, in reply to the famous *Eikon Basilike* of Charles I (or John Gauden, Bishop of Worcester, as seems more likely), which, appearing at the time of the King's execution, had a sale so remarkable that some fifty editions of it are said to have been exhausted in the same year. The manuscript copy of this mysterious book was not received by Richard Royston, the royal bookseller, at the Angel, in Ivy Lane, until 23rd December 1648, and great efforts were made to issue it before the King's execution at the end of the following month. It was printed by William Dugard, headmaster of Merchant Taylors School, where he had set up a private printing press; and the work was ready, if not immediately before the day of execution (30th January 1649), at least immediately after, for we have it on Toland's authority that a copy was bought on 31st January. It has been suggested that had this book appeared a week sooner it might have saved the King's life. Dugard shortly afterwards printed Salmasius's *Defensio Regia*, whereupon the Council of State committed him to Newgate, turned his wife and family out of doors, seized all his printing plant, and ordered the Governors of the School to elect a new master. Subsequently Dugard made his peace with Parliament, and being reinstated at his school, and having his printing effects returned to him, he served the ruling powers with the loyalty which he had hitherto displayed for the Royalists. Among other things he printed Milton's official reply to Salmasius.

The book trade, as sensitive then as now to outside disturbance, was naturally affected during these years of strife. Most of the reading matter of the day took the form of controversial pamphlets or news-sheets, each side having its own organs, published two or three times a week in the more stirring stages of the

wars.¹ But all pure literature, as we have shown, did not cease to issue from the press. Sir Thomas Browne, forced by the pirated editions of his *Religio Medici*, which appeared in London in 1642, from an imperfect manuscript text—for though not intended for publication he had allowed it to be copied by one friend after another—issued the first authorised edition in 1643. Nothing shows the effrontery of these crafty publishers of the seventeenth century better than the circumstances surrounding the publication of the *Religio Medici*. The publisher in question was Andrew Crooke, who was no mere pirate in a small way of business, but one of the principal members of the Stationers' Company. Coming into possession of a manuscript copy of the *Religio Medici*, he published two unauthorised and anonymous editions in 1642, and only communicated with the author to inform him that Sir Kenelm Digby was writing animadversions on the work. Thereupon Sir Thomas Browne wrote to Digby the letter which is now printed with the *Religio Medici*, and, notwithstanding Crooke's behaviour in the earlier editions, supplied him with the revised text for the authorised version. This appeared in the spring of 1643, Crooke being quite ready to announce it as 'a true and full copy of that which was most imperfectly and surreptitiously printed before'.

'This piece', writes Sir Thomas, in his prefatory letter to Digby, 'contrived in my private study, and as an exercise unto myself, rather than excitation for any other, having past from my hand under a broken and imperfect copy, by frequent transcription it still runs forward into corruption, and after the addition of some things, omission of others, and transposition of many, without my assent or privacy the liberty of these times committed it unto the press; whence it issued so disguised, the author without distinction could not acknowledge it.' Common justice compels us to perpetuate the name of the pirate who had thus forced Sir Thomas's hand; and let us not be unthankful that the *Religio Medici* has come down to us even by such dubious means as those employed by the barefaced Crooke.

¹ It was due to the indefatigable pains of a bookseller that we possess at this day—in the British Museum—the remarkable series formerly described as the 'King's Pamphlets', but now better known as the 'Thomason Collection'. George Thomason, who had these ephemeral publications bound into nearly 2000 volumes, and preserved them through many vicissitudes, kept his shop at the sign of the Rose and Crown in St. Paul's Churchyard. He does not seem to have prospered as a bookseller, for when he died in 1666 he is said to have been buried 'out of Stationers' Hall (a poore man)'.

Other famous works continued to make their appearance in spite of the storm and stress of national affairs. We have already referred to several of the authors who issued their best, if not their all, during the period covered by the Civil War, the Commonwealth, and the Protectorate. To these may be added Thomas Hobbes, who published his *Leviathan* in the summer of 1651; Jeremy Taylor, who wrote and issued his best work before the Restoration; Sir William Dugdale, the first handsome folio of whose *Monasticon Anglicanum* came from the press of Richard Hodgkinson in 1655; Brian Walton, whose great Polyglot Bible (1657) is the finest monument we possess of seventeenth-century printing, and the second English book to be published by subscription; and Izaak Walton, whose *Compleat Angler* made its first appearance in 1653, the year in which Oliver Cromwell was first installed Protector of the Commonwealth. The following advertisement has been preserved of the first edition of *The Compleat Angler*:

There is published a Booke of Eighteen-pence, called the Compleat Angler, or the Contemplative man's Recreation; being a Discourse on Fish and Fishing. Not unworthy the perusal of most anglers. Sold by Richard Marriot in St. Dunstan's Churchyard, Flete-street.

Gentle Izaak Walton, a quiet man and a follower of peace, 'as most anglers are', was sixty when this advertisement appeared. He had long since retired from Fleet Street, and the noisy neighbourhood of St. Dunstan's, where once he had carried on his business as a linen-draper, in the close friendship of Dr. Donne, vicar of the parish, as well as Dean of St. Paul's, whose life he had written thirteen years before. He lived long enough to see his *Compleat Angler*, 'this book of eighteen-pence'—a single copy of which now realises over £1000¹—run into four editions.

It was Richard Marriot of St. Dunstan's Churchyard, appropriately enough, who published the first separate edition of Walton's life of Donne—originally written as a preface to the first folio of the poet-dean's Sermons (1640), and who subsequently reissued it in the first collection of Walton's *Lives* (1670), which ran into its fourth edition in the next five years. The earliest

¹ The Cotton-Ashburnham-Gilbey set of the first five editions realised £1600 on 29th April 1940. The highest price recorded for a first edition by itself seems to be \$4400 for Mr. Hogan's copy, in original calf, sold in New York on 26th April 1946.

Surviving edition of Donne's poems¹ was issued from the same shop in St. Dunstan's Churchyard in 1633, by John Marriot, presumably Richard's father, who published there until 1640. Strong efforts were made by Donne's son to suppress this edition, as well as a similar volume of Donne's *Juvenilia*—both posthumous productions—on account of the looser pieces of the poet's youth, which scandalised not a few of the great dean's ardent admirers. In a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury dated 16th December 1637, John Donne the younger begs him to take the matter in hand, and punish the publishers for daring to issue poems which he protests were none of his father's. 'Of which abuses', he writes, 'they have been often warned by your petitioner, and tolde that if they desisted that they should be proceeded against before your Grace, which they seem so much to slight, that they professe soddainly to publish few impressions, verie much to the greife of your petitioner,—and the discredite of ye memorie of his Father.'²

Had John Donne the younger not been the hateful man that he was—and his clerical cloth made him the more despicable—it is obvious that a good deal might be said from his point of view regarding this disreputable business. Donne's son, though admitted to holy orders about this time, was already notorious for his profligate habits, and his character never seems to have possessed a single redeeming feature. The hypocrisy of his 'greife' is apparent when we find him issuing through Henry Herringman in 1669 not only all the pieces complained of in Marriot's edition of his father's poems, but 'divers copies under his own hand never before printed', including a number of contributions which the dean must have repented of in his virtuous old age as sincerely as of anything else that he wrote in his unregenerate youth. John Donne the younger probably came to some mercenary arrangement with the original publishers of the poems, for, within a year or two of his letter to the Archbishop, Marriot came out with an edition practically identical with that which he had published before. Donne's son showed himself in his true colours in 1653, when he reprinted a translation of his father's *Conclave Ignatii* as a newly discovered work of the

¹ In a letter to his friend Sir Henry Goodere, written towards the close of 1614, Donne mentioned that he was about to issue a small private edition of poems—'not for much public view', as he expresses it, 'but at mine own cost'. Unfortunately no copy of this edition can now be traced.

² Published by Dr. Grosart for the first time in his edition of Donne's poems in the 'Mellor Worthies' Library, 1873.

dean's, and recently translated by Jasper Maine, though he himself had suppressed an edition of exactly the same English version which had been published nineteen years before. He left manuscripts of his own which, from all accounts, are unspeakably obscene, and succeeded in publishing one volume of his indecencies only six months before his death in 1662.



ARMS OF THE OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

THE RESTORATION AND THE REVOLUTION

THE Restoration not only brought a renewal of the censorship, but introduced to the book trade the indefatigable Roger L'Estrange, who, not content with disturbing every individual connected with the press, had designs on the Stationers' Company itself. The Licensing Act of 1662, in which the Royal prerogative was strongly reasserted, was a crushing blow to the administrative powers of the Company, whose interests were practically ignored by it, a new office being created in the following year under the title of 'Surveyor of the Imprimery and Printing Presses'. The number of printers at work in London, which had then grown to sixty, was again reduced to twenty, and most of the clauses of the Star Chamber decree of 1627 were reinforced. The new Act and its administration were hotly debated, and led, among other things, to a petition from the Stationers' Company to the effect that their ancient privilege of controlling unruly members and searching for unlicensed books might be restored to them.

Roger L'Estrange was appointed to inquire into the whole matter. On 3rd June 1663 he published his *Considerations and Proposals in order to the Regulation of the Press*, addressed to Charles II—a long-winded document full of immoderate denunciations of the Stationers, 'for they are the principal authors of those mischiefs which they pretend now to redress, and the very persons against whom the penalties of this intended regulation are chiefly levelled'. The same arguments, he maintained, held good against the printers, between whom and the stationers a distinct line was now drawn. 'To conclude', he added, 'both printers and stationers, under colour of offering a service to the publique, do effectually but design one upon another. The printers would beat down the bookselling trade by managing the press as themselves please, and by working upon their own copies. The stationers, on the other side, they would subject the printers to be absolutely their slaves; which they have effected in a large measure already, by so encreasing the number, that the one half must either play the knave or starve.' This tribute to the triumph of the stationer, or book-

seller, over the printer, who, in the earliest days of the press, had matters much his own way, corroborates the older statements of Christopher Barker and George Wither and explains the abortive attempt made by eleven of the leading London printers either in 1660 or 1661 to found a new company, independent of the Stationers, to look after their own special interests. Evelyn will be found to bear later and similar testimony on p. 117. L'Estrange was not content with the ordinary penalties which he found available for inflicting upon his offenders, such as death, mutilation, the pillory, stocks, whipping, carting, stigmatising, 'standing under the gallows with a rope about the neck at a publique execution', and a sufficient variety of other punishments, one would have thought, even for a man of his catholic taste. He had, however, a great idea of making the punishment fit the crime; or making the penalty, as he expresses it, 'bear proportion to the malice'. So, with a sort of Gilbertian ingenuity, he proceeded to draw up a list of suggestions:

In some cases, they may be condemn'd to wear some visible badge, or mark of ignominy, as a halter instead of a hatband, one stocking blew and another red; a blew bonnet with a red T or S upon it, to denote the crime to be either treason or sedition: and if at any time the person so condemned shall be found without the said badge or marque during the time of his obligation to wear it, let him incur some further penalty, provided only that if within the said time he shall discover and seize, or cause to be seized, any author, printer, or stationer, liable at the time of that discovery and seizure, to be proceeded against for the matter of treasonous or seditious pamphlets, the offender aforesaid shall, from the time of that discovery, be discharged from wearing it any longer.

L'Estrange agreed that these proposals might seem 'phantastique', but there are many men, he shrewdly added, 'who had rather suffer any other punishment than be made publicly ridiculous'. L'Estrange was obviously too good a man to be wasted; besides, his unflinching loyalty to the King in the darkest days of his exile had long cried out for adequate recompense; so on 15th August 1663 he was appointed to succeed Sir John Birkenhead as 'Surveyor of the Imprimery', with similar police powers to those previously held by the Stationers' Company. In addition he was

one of the licensers of the press, and had the sole privilege of printing and publishing anything in the shape of a newspaper or public advertisement. Until the outbreak of the Plague, when it was mercifully allowed to lapse, the new Act, under L'Estrange, was more rigorously enforced than the short-lived Star Chamber decree of 1637.

The energetic Surveyor took to making midnight raids on printing houses, and had not been many months in office before he caused the arrest and execution of John Twyn—he was hanged, drawn, and quartered—for printing a pamphlet entitled *A Treatise on the Execution of Justice*, described as 'a seditious, scandalous, and poisonous book', and alleged to form part of a plot against the King's life and government. This was not, however, as some one has stated, 'the first time in English history' that 'a printer suffered the penalty of death for the liberty of the press', for William Carter, as we have shown, was done to death in the same horrible way eighty years before, in Elizabeth's reign.

Worse disasters fell upon the book trade than the appointment of Roger L'Estrange. The Plague of 1665 ruthlessly thinned the ranks of all classes of stationers, and with the withdrawal of the Court to Oxford,¹ and the wholesale flight of the citizens, the trade was brought practically to a standstill. Then, in the following year, came the more sweeping disaster of the Great Fire, which, in addition to other bookselling quarters, wiped out the very centre of the trade in St. Paul's Churchyard. Here the booksellers lost an immense stock of books, which they had stored for safety in the vaults of the church. 'I hear', says Pepys, on 26th September of this year, 'the great loss of books in St. Paul's Church-yard, and at their Hall also, which they value at about £150,000; some booksellers being wholly undone, and among others, they say, my poor Kirton'—Joseph Kirton being the bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard of whom we hear a good deal in the course of Pepys's *Diary*.² Later he learnt that poor Kirton was 'utterly undone, and

¹ It was during this stay at Oxford that Arlington, the Lord Chamberlain, licensed the publication of the *Oxford Gazette*, notwithstanding the exclusive privilege held by L'Estrange, who now had two similar sheets running in London—the *Intelligence*, published on Mondays, and the *News*, which appeared on Thursdays. The Oxford rival was produced bi-weekly and reprinted in London, where, upon the King's return to his capital, it became the *London Gazette*, effectually silencing L'Estrange's publication, and continuing its useful existence down to the present day.

² The Diaries of both Pepys and Evelyn remained in manuscript until the nineteenth century, when they made their first appearance in print within seven years of each other—Evelyn's in 1818, and Pepys's in 1825. Henry Colburn was the publisher in each case.

made £2000 or £3000 worse than nothing, from being worth £7000 or £8000'. All the great booksellers, he was told, had been similarly ruined; 'not only these, but their warehouses at their Hall, and under Christ Church, and elsewhere, being all burned. A great want there will be of books', he adds, 'specially Latin books and foreign books; and, among others, the Polyglottes¹ and new Bible, which he believes will be presently worth £40 a-piece'. Evelyn expresses the same fear in a letter to the Earl of Clarendon, not long before the Lord Chancellor's downfall.

Since the late deplorable conflagration [he writes], in which the stationers have been exceedingly ruined, there is like to be an extraordinary penury and scarcity of classic authors, etc., used in our grammar schools; so that of necessity they must suddenly be reprinted. My Lord may please to understand that our booksellers follow their own judgment in printing the antient authors according to such text as they found extant when first they entered their copy, whereas out of MSS. collated by the industry of later critics, those authors are exceedingly improved. . . . The cause of this is principally the stationer driving as hard and cruel a bargain with the printer as he can; and the printer, taking up any smatterer in the tongues, to be the lesse loss; an exactness in this in no wayes importing the stipulation; by which meanes errors repeate and multiply in every edition, and that most notoriously in some most necessary schole-bookes of value, which they obtrude upon the buyer, unless men will be at unreasonable rates for forraigne editions. Your Lordship does by this perceive the mischievous effects of this avarice and negligence in them.

Evelyn then considers what might be done to remedy this condition of things. First, he suggests an inspection as to what texts of the Greek and Latin authors should be followed in future editions. Secondly, that a censor be established to see that all printers are adequately provided with able correctors of the press. Thirdly, that the whole cost be borne by the Stationers' Company. He considers the time ripe for such a move, for 'this sad calamity has mortified a Company which was exceedingly haughty and difficult to manage to any usefull reformation'.

If the stationers needed any chastening—and no doubt many of

¹ Walton's Polyglot Bible, referred to on p. 111.

them did—they had surely had their full share of it during the last two years. Apart from their private sufferings they had experienced a grievous loss in the destruction of their Hall, with their original Charter and other irrecoverable treasures. Most fortunately the registers escaped. This was the third hall owned by London stationers, for they appear to have possessed a home of their own, as an ordinary Brotherhood, somewhere in or near Milk Street before their incorporation in Mary's reign. 'The supposed site of the first hall', writes C. R. Rivington, in his brief but useful *Records*, 'is still in the possession of the Company.' The second hall, to which a move was made some time before 1570, was probably on the south side of St. Paul's Churchyard, but this was leased in 1606 to a vintner who turned it into a tavern. Five years later the partners in the English Stock bought Abergavenny House, lying back between Amen Corner and Ave Maria Lane, and converted it into a hall for the Company's use. When it had to be rebuilt in 1654, being then hopelessly out of repair, the Company settled the cost by the sale of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, the copyright of which had come into its possession many years before, and was still of very great value. It was not, however, until 1670 that the Stationers appointed a Committee to rebuild the hall, and four years later we hear of Stephen College—the 'Protestant Joiner' afterwards executed at Oxford—being commissioned to wainscot the new building for the sum of £300.

It was in March of the year following the Great Fire—which burnt his own birthplace—that Milton, who had long since resigned his political hopes, and settled down to his life-work as a poet, signed the celebrated agreement with Samuel Simmons for the publication of *Paradise Lost*. His old publisher, Humphry Moseley, had died six years before, and the struggle for supremacy in the trade thereafter rested with Richard Marriot (or Marriott), whom we have already seen in St. Dunstan's Churchyard, and Henry Herringman, who had a share in the Third Folio Shakespeare, issued the first authorised edition of Waller's poems, one or two of Milton's early pamphlets, the three obituary panegyrics on Oliver Cromwell by Marvell, Dryden, and Sprat, first editions of Cowley and Denham, and many other works of the kind. 'On the whole, at the time of Moseley's death', writes Dr. Masson, who made a special study of the book trade in Milton's day, 'while the advantage was with Herringman, Marriot's chances were considerable; and

the publication from his shop of the first part of *Hudibras* in 1662 was another incident in his favour. Somehow he could not follow up that success. The second part of *Hudibras*, a year after the first, was not published by him, but by Martin and Allestree; and though he published the poems of Katherine Philips instead, that was a poor substitute. Meanwhile, Herringman had been gaining ground remarkably. Already in possession of Davenant, Lord Orrey, Sir Robert Howard, and Dryden, he had brought round him also Cowley and Boyle, having published the essays of both in 1661, and a volume of Cowley's poems in 1663. In April 1664 he acquired the copyright of all Waller's poetry; and from that time his superiority to Marriot, and his title to be regarded as Moseley's successor in the primacy of the book trade, admitted of no dispute. He was to publish more and more for Waller, Howard, Dryden, and other poets and dramatists; the scientific connexion he had won through Boyle drew round him the chiefs of the Royal Society as well as the wits of the Court; *Hudibras* and the poems of Katherine Philips were to be his when he chose; and, whenever any stock of old plays and poems was in the market, and especially when Anne Moseley, withdrawing from business, wished to dispose of any of her late husband's copyrights in such things, who so ready to purchase as Herringman? In fact Herringman and his shop are one of the most vivid traditions of the Restoration. The shop was "at the sign of the Blue Anchor in the Lower Walk of the New Exchange", this New Exchange, so called to distinguish it from the Old Exchange in the city, being on the south side of the Strand, on the site of the present Adelphi. Any time before the Great Plague and the Great Fire, but perhaps more distinctly after those events than before, this shop of Herringman's was the chief literary lounging-place in London.

Samuel Simmons, whose address was 'next door to the Golden Lion in Aldersgate Street', was practically a beginner, without any record or distinction behind him, but it is probable that he was a son of the late Matthew Simmons, of the same address, who had published Milton's *Eikonoklastes*, as well as several of his earlier tracts, and had become official printer to the Commonwealth during the first year of Milton's secretaryship. *Paradise Lost* may have gone to Samuel Simmons, therefore, for old associations' sake. The agreement itself is printed by Masson, as follows. There were, of course, as he points out, two copies, and it is the copy

signed for Milton by proxy, and kept by Simmons, that has been preserved:

These Presents, made the 27th day of Aprill 1667, Betweene John Milton, gent., of thone ptie, and Samuel Symons, Printer, of thother ptie, Wittness:—That the said John Milton, in consideration of five pounds to him now paid by the said Samm^{ll} Symons and other the considerations herein mentioned, hath given, granted, and assigned, and by these pnts doth give, grant, and assigne, unto the said Samm^{ll} Symons, his executors and assignes, All that Booke, Copy, or Manuscript of a Poem intituled Paradise Lost, or by whatsoever other title or name the same is or shalbe called or distinguished, now lately Licensed to be printed, Together with the full benefitt, profit, and advantage thereof, or w^h shall or may arise thereby. And the said John Milton, for him, his ex^{ts} and ad^s, doth covenant with the said Sam^{ll} Symons, his ex^{ts} and ass^{ns}, That hee and they shall at all tymes hereafter have, hold, and enjoy the same, and all Impressions thereof accordingly, without the lett or hinderance of him, the said John Milton, his ex^{ts} or ass^{ns}, or any pson or psons by his or their consent or privitie, And that the said Jo. Milton, his ex^{ts} or ad^s or any other by his or their meanes or consent, shall not print or cause to be printed, or sell, dispose, or publish, the said Booke or Manuscript, or any other Booke or Manuscript of the same tenor or subject, without the consent of the said Sam^{ll} Symons, his ex^{ts} and ass^{ns}. In consideracion whereof, the said Sam^{ll} Symons, for him, his ex^{ts} and ad^s, doth covenant with the said John Milton, his ex^{ts} and ad^s, the sum of five pounds of lawfull english money at the end of the first Impression which the said Sam^{ll} Symons, his ex^{ts} or ass^{ns}, shall make and publish of the said Copy or Manuscript; Which impression shalbe accounted to be ended when thirteene hundred Books of the said whole Copy or Manuscript imprinted shalbe sold and retailed off to pticular reading Customers; And shall also pay other five pounds unto the said Mr. Milton, or his ass^{ns}, at the end of the second Impression, to be accounted as aforesaid; And five pounds more at the end of the third Impression, to be in like manner accounted; And that the said three first Impressions shall not exceed fiteene hundred Books or volumes of the said whole Copy or Manuscript a peice: And further, That he the said Samuel Symons, and his

ex^{ts}, ad^s, and ass^{ts}, shalbe ready to make oath before a Master in Chancery concerning his or their knowledge and beleife of or concerning the truth of the disposing and selling the said Books by Retail, as aforesaid, whereby the said Mr. Milton is to be intituled to his said money from time to time, upon every reasonable request in that behalfe, or in default thereof shall pay the said five pounds agreed to be paid upon each Impression, as aforesaid, as if the same were due, and for and in lieu thereof.— In witness whereof the said pties have to this writing indented interchangeably sett their hands and seales, the day and yeare first abovewritten.

JOHN MILTON

Sealed and delivered in the
presence of us,

JOHN FISHER,

BENJAMIN GREENE, ser^t to Mr. Milton.¹

On the face of it, it seems an iniquitous bargain that Milton should receive for such a stupendous achievement as *Paradise Lost* the miserable sum of £5 down, with the promise of a further £5 when the first edition was exhausted, and two similar sums at the end of the second and third editions, if called for. But a number of not unimportant points must be remembered before passing judgment on the publisher. In 1667 £5 would be equal to about £30 in our present money, and as Milton himself received one further sum of £5, for a second edition was already demanded by the spring of 1669, his returns, in present-day reckoning, would amount to about £60. In 1680, six years after the poet's death, his widow resigned the full copyright to Simmons for a third and

¹ The original [writes Masson] is in the British Museum, having been presented to that collection in 1852 by Samuel Rogers, the poet, who had purchased it in 1831, for a hundred guineas, from Mr. Pickering, the publisher. It had come down in the possession of the famous publishing family of the Tonsons, who had acquired part copyright of *Paradise Lost* in 1683 and the whole before 1691, and had thus got into their hands this evidence of the original sale. Notwithstanding the vague history of the document between 1767 and 1824, there is not the least doubt as to its genuineness. It is the actual copy of the agreement as kept by Simmons. But there has been a general mistake as to the signature. The poet Rogers, who was proud of the relic, never doubted, when he showed it to his friends, that the signature was Milton's own; most of those who now look at the relic in the British Museum never doubt it. Most certainly, however, the signature is not Milton's own, but a signature written for him by someone else, and certified by the touch of Milton's finger and by the annexed Milton family seal of the Spread Eagle. This might have occurred to anyone on reflecting that Milton in 1667 had been fifteen years totally blind.

final payment of £8—equal now to some £48, so that the publisher paid for *Paradise Lost* sums which, all told, would amount at the present time approximately to £108; still wretchedly inadequate, but hardly warranting all the abuse that has been heaped on the publisher's head by succeeding generations of authors. It must not be forgotten, too, that when Milton ventured from his retirement with *Paradise Lost*, he was not exactly every publisher's choice. His name still stank in the nostrils of the Royalists as that of a hated Republican, and author of *Eikonoklastes*. If he had been mentioned at all since the Restoration it was but as 'that serpent Milton', or in an expression of regret that he had not been either hanged with the regicides or at least sent with some of them to lifelong imprisonment.

It is not impossible that he took *Paradise Lost* to Herringman, who, like Simmons, had escaped the fire, or some other leading publisher, and could only find Simmons willing to take the risk. Simmons, as it happened, made by *Paradise Lost*, according to Dr. Masson's calculation, about five or six times as much as he paid its author—a vastly disproportionate return, it is true, but he seems to have worked uncommonly hard—and with striking success—to get the book firmly established. At least nine successive bindings, and a curious variety of title-pages, were issued before the first edition was exhausted, the publisher's plan, to judge from the number of booksellers who figure as his agents in the various imprints, being to scatter the edition as widely over the town as possible.

Simmons does not seem to have been at all anxious to keep the copyright of *Paradise Lost*, for at the end of 1680, or early in 1681, he sold it for £25 to Brabazon Aylmer, 'at the sign of the Three Pigeons in Cornhill'. How it would have fared had the copyright remained in Aylmer's possession it is idle now to speculate, but, as it happened, before the work was reprinted, it fell into the hands of Jacob Tonson, who had just started in business, and was soon to become, in Masson's phrase, 'the third man after Humphry Moseley and Henry Herringman in the true apostolic succession of London publishers'.

The great Tonson deserves a whole chapter to himself, but to follow him alone through his long career would spoil the structure of our narrative. He must take his place therefore with the rest of his craft: a young man as we see him at first, following the

example of his brother Richard, who, like Jacob, had been left £100 by his father. Richard had opened a bookshop in 1676 within Gray's Inn Gate, where, among other things, he had already published Otway's *Don Carlos*. Jacob started business in 1678 at the Judge's Head, in Chancery Lane, where he too became one of Otway's booksellers, as well as one of Nahum Tate's. More ambitious than his brother, Jacob began to cast his net for Dryden, now Poet Laureate. Dryden was one of Herringman's authors, but Tonson had not been in business two years before he succeeded in tempting him with £20 for his play, *Troilus and Cressida; or, Truth Found Too Late*, which he published in 1679, sharing the venture with another bookseller of the name of Abel Swalle. A few years later came the half-share in *Paradise Lost*, which he bought from Brabazon Aylmer on 17th August 1683, paying more for it than Aylmer had given to Simmons for the whole copyright some three years previously. It was not, however, until 1688 that Tonson first turned this investment to profitable account by issuing his handsome folio edition of the work with Dryden's well-known lines engraved beneath the portrait of Milton. This edition was published by subscription, and proved so successful that Tonson did not hesitate, in 1690-1, to buy 'at an advanced price' the second half of the copyright, subsequently acquiring the rest of Milton's poetry—or at least the leading share in it—from other publishers. According to Spence, Jacob admitted on one occasion that *Paradise Lost* brought him in more money than any other poem that he published.

Meantime Dryden and Tonson had been associated in other great works—not always, unhappily, in the friendliest spirit. 'He was the bookseller to the famous Dryden', says John Dunton in 1705, 'and is himself a very good judge of persons and authors; and as there is nobody more competently qualified to give their opinion upon one another, so there is none who does it with a more severe exactness, or with less partiality; for, to do Mr. Tonson justice, he speaks his mind upon all occasions, and will flatter nobody.' We need not take this estimate of Tonsonian candour too literally. His letters to Dryden at the time of their disputes are more often in the nature of soft answers endeavouring to turn away wrath. The truth is that great changes were taking place in the book trade, and no one was quicker than Tonson to recognise, among other signs, that professional writers with a popular following were becoming a power to be reckoned with. This had been due largely to

that omnipotent person the general reader, who, slowly but surely, had been altering the literary outlook. Books which hitherto had been regarded as appealing only to the leisured and cultured classes had a wider audience. Authors, as well as publishers, now looked for a proportionate addition to their profits. How rapidly things were changing in this respect may be seen in the difference between Milton's original £5 for *Paradise Lost*, and the £1200 which Dryden, in the next generation, is said by Pope to have received, all told, for his *Virgil*, or the two hundred and fifty guineas which Tonson paid the same poet for the first edition of his *Fables*, with an engagement to bring that sum up to £300 on sending the book to a second edition.¹

Dryden realised as soon as anyone the altered state of the literary market, and needed no Society of Authors to look after his interests. He had some of the contempt for the booksellers which characterised the old Court poets, but none of their delicate scruples about accepting money from the trade. 'Some kind of intercourse must

¹ The memorials of this transaction, given by Dr. Johnson in his life of the poet, are to the following effect:

'I do hereby promise to pay John Dryden, Esq., or order, on the 25th of March 1699, the sum of two hundred and fifty guineas, in consideration of ten thousand verses, which the said John Dryden, Esq., is to deliver to me, Jacob Tonson, when finished, whereof seven thousand five hundred verses, more or less, are already in the said Jacob Tonson's possession. And I do hereby farther promise and engage myself, to make up the said sum of two hundred and fifty guineas three hundred pounds sterling to the said John Dryden, Esq., his executors, administrators, or assigns, at the beginning of the second impression of the said ten thousand verses.

'In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this 20th day of March, 1698.

'JACOB TONSON

'Sealed and delivered, being first duly stampd, pursuant to the acts of parliament for that purpose, in the presence of

'BEN PORTLOCK.'
'WILL CONGREVE.'

'March 24, 1698.

'Received then of Mr. Jacob Tonson the sum of two hundred sixty-eight pounds fifteen shillings, in pursuance of an agreement for ten thousand verses, to be delivered by me to the said Jacob Tonson, whereof I have already delivered to him about seven thousand five hundred, more or less; he the said Jacob Tonson being obliged to make up the foresaid sum of two hundred and sixty-eight pounds fifteen shillings three hundred pounds, at the beginning of the second impression of the foresaid ten thousand verses;

'I say, received by me,

'JOHN DRYDEN

'Witness, CHARLES DRYDEN.'

Dryden's death in May 1700, only six months after the first publication of the *Fables*, robbed him of the supplementary sum. The second edition was not published until 1713.

be carried on betwixt us', he wrote tartly during one of his little differences with Tonson, 'while I am translating Virgil. Therefore I give you notice that I have done the seventh *Æneid* in the country; and intend, some few days hence, to go upon the eighth; when that is finished, I expect fifty pounds in good silver; not such as I have had formerly. I am not obliged to take gold, neither will I; nor stay for it beyond four-and-twenty hours after it is due. . . . I told Mr. Congreve that I knew you too well to believe you meant me any kindness.'

Debased coinage was the cause of much of the trouble between Tonson and his angry poet, who either could not or would not realise that Tonson, like everybody else, was suffering from the same cause. 'These complaints and demands', as Macaulay justly says, 'which have been preserved from destruction only by the eminence of the writer, are doubtless merely a fair example of the correspondence which filled all the mail-bags of England for several months.' In justice to Dryden it is only fair to add that when he wrote in this strain to his publisher he had been deprived by the Revolution of his post as laureate and historiographer, and was now mainly dependent for his income upon what he could earn by his works. 'The inevitable consequence of poverty', says Dr. Johnson in his *Life of Dryden*, 'is dependence. Dryden had probably no recourse in his exigences but to his bookseller. The particular character of Tonson I do not know; but the general conduct of traders was much less liberal in those times than in our own; their views were narrower, and their manners grosser. To the mercantile ruggedness of that race, the delicacy of the poet was sometimes exposed. Lord Bolingbroke, who in his youth had cultivated poetry, related to Dr. King of Oxford that one day, when he visited Dryden, they heard, as they were conversing, another person entering the house. "This", said Dryden, "is Tonson. You will take care not to depart before he goes away; for I have not completed the sheet which I promised him; and, if you leave me unprotected, I must suffer all the rudeness to which his resentment can prompt his tongue."'

There is no trace of this alleged rudeness in any of the surviving correspondence between Dryden and his publisher; the boot is rather on the other foot. The letters begin hopefully enough in 1684 with the poet's acknowledgment of two melons which had been sent as a present from the publisher, and end with the final

reconciliation in 1697, when he thanks him 'heartily for the sherry', and, in another note, hopes that his *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day* has done him service, 'and will do more'.

Dryden apparently decided to make the best of what he regarded as inevitably a bad job. 'Upon trial', he told him a few months later, 'I find all of your trade are sharpeners, and you not more than others; therefore I have not wholly left you.' In his life of the poet, Sir Walter Scott has some pertinent remarks to make not only on the subject of these disputes with Tonson, but also on the whole eternal question of the pecuniary rewards of authorship:

Whatever occasional subjects of dissension arose between Dryden and his bookseller, mutual interest, the strongest of ties, appears always to have brought them together, after the first ebullition of displeasure had subsided. There might, on such occasions, be room for acknowledging faults on both sides; for, if we admit that the bookseller was penurious and churlish, we cannot deny that Dryden seems often to have been abundantly captious and irascible. Indeed, as the poet placed, and justly, more than a mercantile value upon what he sold, the trader, on his part, was necessarily cautious not to afford a price which his returns could not pay; so that while, in one point of view, the author sold at an inadequate price, the purchaser, in another, really got no more than value for his money. That literature is ill recompensed, is generally rather the fault of the public than the bookseller, whose trade can only exist by buying that which can be sold to advantage. The bookseller, who purchased the *Paradise Lost* for ten pounds, had probably no very good bargain.

Tonson, like all of us, had his failings, but he did yeoman service in helping to develop a popular literary taste. His liberality to his leading authors, notwithstanding Dryden's grievances, fairly entitle him to be regarded as our first Prince of Publishers. Apart from his own authors, he not only introduced Milton to a far larger public than he had ever known before, but, with Rowe's octavo edition in seven volumes (1709), was practically the first to open Shakespeare to the general reader, the four folio editions, apart from their expense, having already become scarce. Jacob had moved to the sign of the Shakespeare's Head in Gray's Inn Gate—probably his late brother's shop—when he published Rowe's edition, but before following him there, and entering upon the Golden Age

of Bookselling, as some one has called the eighteenth century, it is necessary to gather up a few of the remaining threads of seventeenth-century history.

John Bunyan and his publishers take us back to the early days of Roger L'Estrange's surveyorship. More than one of Bunyan's booksellers, as well as the author himself, was unpleasantly familiar with the prison-house. Francis Smith, who published his earlier works at the sign of the Elephant and Castle, near Temple Bar, fell into official disfavour from the very beginning of the Restoration. He was known as Anabaptist, *alias* 'Elephant Smith', and became quite accustomed to having his house searched, and his windows smashed. Dr. John Brown, in his exhaustive life of Bunyan, tells us that in 1660—the very year of Charles the Second's proclamation—'Elephant Smith' was three times a prisoner for publishing a little book entitled *The Lord's Loud Call to England*, and similar productions, being kept, apparently, in the hands of the King's Messengers at a noble a day, the total cost amounting to £50. In August of the following year Smith and piles of his books were seized. Smith was taken to the Gate-house Prison for 'having a hand in printing and compiling dangerous Books'—which surely were not so very dangerous, remarks Dr. Brown, seeing that those who carried them off straightway sold the sheets to the trade again, and put the money into their own pockets.

During the imprisonment, he recorded, 'I was locked up in a room where I had neither chair nor stool to rest upon, and yet ten shillings per week must be the price, and before I had been there three nights £7 15s. was demanded for present fees. That is to say, £5 to excuse me for wearing irons, ten shillings for my entrance-week lodging, five shillings for sheets, five shillings for garnish money, and the rest for Turnkey's fees.' Elsewhere he describes how he fell into the toils of L'Estrange and his men, evidently being a marked man. Brown suggests that it was because this shop was no longer safe that Bunyan changed his publisher, for until *Grace Abounding* was issued by George Larkin in 1666 all his prison books were published by 'Elephant Smith'. The *Pilgrim's Progress* came from yet another publisher—Nathaniel Ponder, whose shop was then in the Poultry, at the sign of the Peacock. Ponder published for John Owen, the great Nonconformist theologian, who had helped to secure Bunyan's final release from prison. It was probably on this account that *Pilgrim's Progress* obtained its introduction to

its publisher, who, after its successful production, became known among his brother craftsmen as 'Bunyan Ponder'. He was an agreeable man to have dealings with. 'He has', says Dunton, 'sweetness and enterprise in his air which plead and anticipate in his favour.' Notwithstanding his pleasant manner, however, 'Bunyan Ponder', like 'Elephant Smith', had in the previous year found his way to the Gate-house Prison, as may be seen from the Privy Council Minutes, where there is the following record: '1676. At the Court at Whitehall, May 10th (the King present), a warrant was issued to commit Nathaniell Ponder to the Gate-house, for carrying to the presse to be printed an unlicensed Pamphlet tending to Sedition and Defamation of the Christian Religion.'

Ponder, however, had in his composition little of the stuff of which martyrs are made, for we find another entry on the 26th of the same month to the effect that: 'Nathaniel Ponder, Stationer, was discharged upon his humble petition, setting forth his hearty sorrow for his offence, and promising never to offend in like manner.' He also had to pay his prison fees and enter into a bond of £500 as surety for his good behaviour. Ponder entered *Pilgrim's Progress* in the Stationers' Register as his copy on 22nd December 1677, and published it early in the following year, 'price bound 1s. 6d.' The book met with a success which surprised no one more than Bunyan himself, three editions being called for within the first twelve months. Bunyan took the opportunity with each of these reprints to make several notable additions, and was encouraged by their continued popularity to venture upon the second part, which came from the same publisher early in 1685, bearing on the reverse of the title-page the significant warning: 'I appoint Mr. Nathaniel Ponder, but no other, to Print this Book. John Bunyan.' It was necessary to print this, for spurious books were already in circulation purporting to be *The Second Part of the Pilgrim's Progress*, one by a writer who signed himself T. S., and closely resembling the original book in shape and type, coming from a John Malthus, whose shop, at the sign of the Sun, was actually in the same thoroughfare as Ponder's—the Poultry. Eleven editions of the *Pilgrim's Progress* were published altogether during the author's lifetime, all by Nathaniel Ponder, though after Bunyan's death in 1688 his name disappears from the imprint until the fifteenth edition of 1695, when he makes his final appearance as the *Pilgrim's* publisher.

Before Bunyan first walked into his shop with the manuscript of the

Pilgrim's Progress, Ponder had numbered Andrew Marvell among his authors. That was in the earlier 'seventies, when he displayed his sign of the Peacock in Chancery Lane. Whether he published any of Marvell's political poems cannot now be said, for most of these, appearing probably as broadsides or pamphlets immediately they were written, have long since disappeared in their original form.

A more distinguished worthy to whose memory justice has never yet been done in our scanty bookselling annals is Thomas Guy, better known as the founder of the great hospital which still bears his name. Charles Knight, who has given currency to most of the legends surrounding this shadowy figure, embroiders his facts with so much idle, if amiable, imagining, and makes assumptions so wide of the mark, that it is by no means easy to disentangle fact from fiction. It was not until Dr. Samuel Wilks and Mr. G. T. Bettany published their *Biographical History of Guy's Hospital* in 1892 that anything approaching an adequate account of Guy's book-selling career, as well as of his public life and benefactions, found its way into print. From all accounts it is clear that Guy, like various other publishers who have since left fortunes which are frequently, but unfairly, compared with the miserable rewards of authorship, made the bulk of his wealth by financial speculations quite outside the bounds of bookselling business. He was fortunately situated for combining stocks and shares with bookselling.

The little shop which he opened for the first time in 1667, with a stock worth, it is said, some £200, stood at the angle formed by Cornhill and Lombard Street, in view of the new Exchange which was springing up from the ruins of Sir Thomas Gresham's original building, swept away, like everything else in the neighbourhood, by the Great Fire of the preceding year. Guy evidently caught the speculative spirit from his surroundings. His early Bible trade was itself not a little risky. The printing of Bibles was still largely in the hands of the London monopolists, who, secure in their privileges, produced copies of the Scriptures which were a disgrace both to their craft and their religion. Cambridge occasionally exercised its right to print Bibles, but Oxford had bartered away its similar privilege to the Stationers' Company in 1637 for an annual payment of £200. The London printers in Guy's early days therefore had matters much their own way, with the result that Bibles were not only expensive to buy, but so shamefully printed that one edition is said to have contained no fewer than six thousand errors.

Perhaps it was in the pious hope of remedying this evil, as Charles Knight would have us believe, that Guy joined with others in encouraging the printing of the English Bible in Holland, importing whole editions for circulation in this country, and doubtless making a handsome profit thereby. This trade, writes William Maitland in the account of Guy and his hospital included in his history of London in 1739, 'proving not only very detrimental to the public revenue, but likewise to the King's printer, all ways and means were devised to quash the same; which, being vigorously put in execution, the booksellers, by frequent seizures and prosecutions, became so great sufferers that they judged a further pursuit thereof inconsistent with their own interest'. Thomas Guy and Peter Parker—one of the booksellers who had shared in the sale of the first edition of *Paradise Lost*—were presently able to turn this defeat into a greater victory by becoming associated with Oxford University, which, under the generous influence of Dr. Fell, had begun to awake—in the words of Mr. Falconer Madan in his *Brief Account of the Oxford University Press* (1908)—'not merely to the fact of its privileges, but also to the duties belonging to them'.

In 1673 the agreement with the Stationers' Company lapsed, and Oxford began again to print Bibles and Prayer Books, to the considerable annoyance of the London monopolists, who at once did their best to stifle the competition by imitating and underselling all these new editions. 'So persistently was this done', says Mr. Madan, 'that it was found advisable to bring in some London booksellers into the Oxford business. Moses Pitt and William Leake were first chosen, but they were soon followed by Guy and Parker, and Oxford Bibles between 1679 and 1691 bear the imprint of these four Stationers, sometimes alone, sometimes two or three together'.

Now began a battle royal between the London Stationers and Oxford, in which first honours fell to the University, which sturdily maintained its right to its privileges before the Council, Parker and Guy bearing a large share of the legal expense, amounting in all to many hundreds of pounds. The two printers thereupon made an agreement with the Delegates of the Oxford Press by which, upon payment of £240, being the arrears of the annual sum hitherto received from the Stationers' Company, they should be appointed University Printers with the sole right of printing there. This was carried into effect in March 1684, and the agreement lasted until 1691, when the Stationers' Company, enraged at what they doubt-

less considered the usurpation of Parker and Guy, determined to get them removed, alleging, among other things, that they had made a profit of £10,000, or even £15,000, by their connexion with Oxford, and had thus advanced 'from a low and mean condition to considerable fortune'. The whole story of this unworthy campaign, too long for our pages, is told by Wilks and Bettany, but it seems that the Stationers' Company at last succeeded in prejudicing the University authorities against Guy and Parker to such an extent as to get them removed—January 1692.

During all these years Guy, though doubtless paying occasional visits to Oxford, had been steadily developing his business at his corner shop in the heart of London, apart from the considerable sales of his Oxford Bibles. For a time at least he appears to have taken his younger brother into partnership. He published a large number of school books and books of Divinity, while among his other ventures were the fourth edition of Howell's *Familiar Letters* and the third edition (with Parker) of Ogilvy's translation of Virgil. He was steadily building up his capital, too, in other ways. The story is told by Maitland to the effect that he acquired some of his fortune by the purchase of seamen's tickets at an inordinate profit. 'England being engaged in an expensive war against France, the poor seamen on board the Royal Navy, for many years instead of money received tickets for their pay, which these necessitous but very useful men were obliged to dispose of at thirty, forty, and sometimes fifty in the hundred discount. Mr. Guy discovering the sweets of this traffic, became an early dealer therein.'

There is probably more in this story than Charles Knight is willing to admit in his *Shadows of the Old Booksellers*, though his profits both from the Bible trade, and in his investments in government securities before the foundation of the South Sea Company, would alone account for his consistent and increasing prosperity. He invested largely in South Sea stock, long before the Bubble burst, being one of the shrewd shareholders who sold out in time at an immense profit. Within three months he is said to have made from that source alone upwards of a quarter of a million sterling. Perhaps Thomas Guy had some qualms of conscience when he thought of the wretched investors who had lost their all; but, however that may be, it was largely out of his own huge profits in this connexion that Guy's Hospital was built and endowed, so that some good at least rose, phoenix-like, from the ruins of what has been

described as 'the most enormous fabric of delusion that was ever raised among an industrious, thrifty, and prudent people'.

Success did not tempt Thomas Guy into extravagance. He was as close-fisted in his home as open-handed outside. He denied himself a wife—which was, perhaps, just as well, if there be any truth in the story that he broke off his one matrimonial engagement because his prospective bride had dared to give an order without his permission. Yet he spent his money outside with rare unselfishness. He seems to have been a sort of fairy godfather to whole crowds of poor relations. Long before he built Guy's Hospital he made large benefactions to the Stationers' Company for the less fortunate members of his craft; built three new wards and made other additions to St. Thomas's Hospital, besides being one of its principal governors and a regular subscriber of £100 a year; and not only supplied almshouses to Tamworth, where he was educated, but furnished the place with its new town hall.

Tamworth at first showed its gratitude to Guy by returning him to Parliament in the Whig interest in 1695, and he continued to represent the same town until 1707, when that fickle constituency rejected him. He was mortally offended, and though begged to stand again by the repentant burgesses—who now remembered his oft-repeated promise, that if they supported him faithfully he would leave the whole of his fortune to the town—he declined peremptorily ever to run the risk of a second refusal. He was seventy-five when he made his South Sea fortune in 1720, and had the satisfaction of seeing his hospital roofed in before he died in 1724. At his death he endowed that institution with the residue of his estate, which was worth more than £200,000, after leaving at least half as much again in other bequests and charities.

Meanwhile new laws and customs had been coming into force affecting not only authors and publishers, but the whole book trade. The stringent Licensing Act of 1662, which had been allowed to lapse at the time of the Great Fire, never recovered its original strength, and was not, indeed, renewed by Charles II, though L'Estrange did his best as Surveyor of the Press to make things as lively as possible both for printers and booksellers. He found a monarch more in sympathy with him when James II came to the throne in February 1685, the Act of 1662 being renewed for the first time for twenty years on the new King's opening Parliament. On 30th April L'Estrange himself received his knighthood, and,

three weeks later, his warrant to enforce the regulations with all necessary severity. Dunton, who reveals a good deal of the human interest of the book trade in those far-off days, tells us that there was a yielding side even to L'Estrange's stubborn heart. The Surveyor, he says, was always susceptible to the influence of the better-looking sex, and 'would wink at unlicensed books if the printer's wife would but smile on him'. And Dunton, whose fondness for flirting was only equalled by his boundless egotism, knew what he was writing about.

The time came when King James was 'frighted' away, and Nemesis, in the shape of William of Orange, not only deprived L'Estrange of his licence, but sent him to prison for his avowed hostility. In the end the man who had made so many booksellers' lives a burden was forced to eke out his existence mainly on the wretched payments which they made him for his hack work as a translator. Though the Licensing Act, which had been renewed in 1685 for a period of seven years, was renewed in 1692 for one more year, it does not appear to have been in the least effective. It lapsed altogether at the end of the twelve months' renewal, leaving literary property without any statutory protection until the passing of the Copyright Act of Queen Anne in 1709. The disappearance of the Licensing Laws, and the end of the active history of the Stationers' Company—their police powers having become obsolete, and their political uses long since superseded—thus brought the book trade at the end of the seventeenth century to another new chapter in its history.

Bookselling by auction had also found its way into England by this time, with far-reaching results. William Cooper seems to have been the first bookseller to try the 'Auctionary Way' in this country, though the method seems to have been practised on the Continent, by the Elzevirs and others, between seventy and eighty years before. The earliest book auction of which we have any record took place in Holland on 6th July 1599, when the library of the scholar and patriot, Philip van Marnix, Lord of St. Aldegondi, was dispersed in this way. 'Reader', says William Cooper in the preface to the catalogue of the first English sale—which began on 31st October 1676, at his bookshop at the sign of the Pelican in Little Britain—'It hath not been usual here in England to make sales of Books by way of Auction, or who will give most for them; But it having been practised in other countreys to the Advantage both of Buyers and

Sellers; It was therefore conceived (for the encouragement of Learning) to publish the Sale of these Books this manner of way; and it is hoped that it will not be unacceptable to Schollers.' The catalogue deals with between five and six thousand lots—forming the library of Dr. Lazarus Seaman, one of the Assembly of Divines—and Cooper realised about £3000 from them. The second sale, which was also held by Cooper in Little Britain, was that of the library of the Rector of Hitchin. These first attempts, according to the catalogue of the third sale—which took place at the Turk's Head Coffee House in Bread Street—gave 'great content and satisfaction to the gentlemen who were the buyers, and no discouragement to the sellers.'

Other booksellers followed suit, and the sales soon became common in London; but it was apparently ten years before the method found its way to the provinces—introduced by Edward Millington—and twelve years before it reached Scotland. John Dunton, 'who', to quote the elder d'Israeli, 'boasted that he had a thousand projects, fancied he had methodised six hundred, and was ruined by the fifty he executed', took a shipload of books in 1698 to sell by auction in Dublin. He quarrelled with the Irish booksellers, but returned to London boasting that he had done greater service to literature by his auctions 'than any single man who had come into Ireland these hundred years'. His financial troubles increasing, Dunton took to scribbling, although he declares that he 'could not stoop so low as to turn author'—which he nevertheless thinks was what he was born to. His *Life and Errors of John Dunton, late Citizen of London, written in Solitude*, has been described as the 'maddest of all mad books', but it is extremely useful in the annals of bookselling.

He tells us that when he started bookselling on his own account (about 1681) the first book he published was a work by Thomas Doolittle, the nonconformist tutor whose academy was ruined by constant removal. 'The book fully answered my end', says Dunton, 'for, exchanging it through the whole trade, it furnished my shop with all sorts of books saleable at that time', showing that the custom already alluded to in the earlier history of the Stationers was still in vogue. 'Hackney authors', adds Dunton, 'began to ply me with specimens as earnestly, and with as much passion and concern, as the watermen do passengers with oars and scullers.' Later he complains bitterly of these scribblers, 'that keep their grinders moving by the travail of their pens. These gormandisers

will eat you the very life out of a copy so soon as ever it appears; for, as the times go, *original* and *abridgment* are almost reckoned as necessary as man and wife; so that I am really afraid a bookseller and a good conscience will shortly grow some strange thing in the land'. The mischief to which Dunton refers, remarks Mr. Birrell, in his all too brief essay on *Old Booksellers*, in *In the Name of the Bodleian*, 'was permitted by the stupidity of the judges, who refused to consider an abridgment of a book any interference with its copyright. Some learned judges have, indeed, held that an abridger is a benefactor, but as his benefactions are not his own, but another's, a shorter name might be found for him. The law on the subject is still uncertain'.¹

Fortunately for Dunton he married, in 1682, a daughter of Samuel Annesley, another of whose daughters became the mother of John Wesley. Dunton's wife not only kept him in the paths of honesty, but 'managed all my affairs for me, and left me entirely to my own rambling and scribbling humours'. He took full advantage of this freedom three years later to adventure upon a voyage to the American Colonies with a cargo of books for which apparently there was then little demand at his shop, the Black Raven, in Gracechurch Street. 'There came an universal damp upon trade by the defeat of Monmouth in the west; and at this time, having £500 owing to me in New England, I began to think it worth my while to make a voyage of it thither.' The trade had not as yet made much progress in that part of the world.

The first book printed in New England came from the press established at Harvard College in 1639, with Stephen Day as printer, but his successor, Samuel Green, remained the only printer in the colony until 1660, when Marmaduke Johnson was sent over to join him with a fresh plant for the printing of Bibles for the Indians. Printing was started at Boston in 1675 by John Foster, a Harvard graduate, who was succeeded on his death in 1681 by Samuel Green, junior; and Green was at work there when John Dunton arrived after a four months' voyage from home, during which half of his cargo of books, to the value of £500, had been cast away in the Downs. He consoled himself in New England mainly in aimless flirtations with maids and widows, for his dealings appear to have been anything but satisfactory with the four book-

¹ Authors' rights in this respect have since, however, been safeguarded under the Copyright Act of 1911.

sellers of Boston, to whom he was 'as welcome as sour ale in summer'. 'He that trades with the inhabitants of Boston', writes John, in much bitterness of spirit, 'may get plenty of promises, but their payments come late.'

At the end of a year's wanderings, during which he opened warehouses in Salem and other places, visited Harvard, and learned something of Indian life and habits, he returned to his 'lovely Iris', only to find it necessary first to hide from his creditors at home and then to seek shelter from their insistent demands by an involuntary visit to the Continent. He made a fresh start upon the accession of William and Mary, having been able to settle with his creditors. For a time fortune smiled on him. Among other things he issued the *Athenian Gazette*, which Charles Knight describes as the precursor of a 'revolution in the entire system of our lighter literature, which turned pamphlets and broadsides into magazines and miscellanies'. Then came renewed financial straits, and, to add to his troubles, his Iris died. Her successor proved but a bitter disillusionment. It was about this time that he turned from publishing to book-auctioneering and, as already stated, set sail for Ireland with his shipload of books. Disappointment dodged poor Dunton's footsteps for the rest of his life. He made a pitiful appeal to George I in 1723, entitled *Dying Groans from the Fleet Prison, or last Shift for Life*, claiming to have played a distinguished part in bringing about 'the general deliverance' accomplished by the Hanoverian succession; but, meeting with no reward, he lived on in misery for another ten years.

Dunton has something to say in his *Life and Errors* of that other book-auctioneer, Edward Millington. Millington is said to have sheltered Milton during his temporary absence from home in or about the year 1670, when, after his third marriage, he parted with his three daughters. 'About 1670', says Jonathan Richardson, the authority for this story, who gives it in the life of Milton which he prefixed to *Notes on 'Paradise Lost'* in 1734, 'I have been told by one who then knew him that he lodged some time at the house of Millington, the famous auctioneer some years ago, who then sold old books in Little Britain and who used to lead him by the hand when he went abroad.' Millington, it seems, had a rare way with him with his rôle as auctioneer-bookseller. 'He had a quick wit and a wonderful fluency of speech', writes Dunton. 'There was usually as much wit in his "One, two, three!" as can be met with in a modern play. "Where", said Millington, "is your generous

flame for learning? Who but a sot or a blockhead would have money in his pocket, and starve his brains?"'

There is no doubt that the new system of auctioneering greatly encouraged the love of reading throughout the country. One catalogue mentioned in John Lawler's little book on the subject (*Book-Auctions in England in the Seventeenth Century*) specially invites the country clergy to buy at low prices for distribution among their parishioners. A penny bid was often accepted. The book auction was soon a regular feature at the country fairs, and gradually became a distinct branch of the bookselling trade. There were book lotteries as well, and sales by inch of candle, announcements to that effect being found in the newspapers of the period. The first English auctioneer to compile good, classified catalogues was Samuel Paterson, of King Street, Covent Garden, who died in 1802—'a man', wrote Johnson, who was godfather to his son Samuel, 'for whom I have long had a kindness'. Samuel Paterson was a first-rate bibliographer, but he loved his books too well to make a good business man. We are told that when he came across a book that was new to him he would sit reading it for hours, and the time appointed for the sale could go by for all he cared. No wonder he frequently failed in business. Samuel Baker, in 1744, founded (in York Street, Covent Garden) the first auction room instituted in this country exclusively for the sale of books, MSS., and prints. It was here that Baker's nephew, John Sotheby, entered the business—the first of a long and distinguished line which has been associated with book-auctioneering ever since.



DEVICE OF
LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

THE dawn of the eighteenth century found the book trade in a sorry state of indiscipline. The lapse of the old Licensing Laws in 1694 had left both authors and publishers without the uncertain protection which even those arbitrary measures afforded. The value attaching to the entry of books in the Stationers' Register is seen in the ridiculous totals for the following years:

1701	3 books
1702	2 „
1703	4 „
1704	5 „
1705	5 „
1706	2 „
1707	3 „
1708	2 „

In 1709, however, came the much-abused Copyright Act of Queen Anne—the first copyright Statute ever passed in any country. It was high time that something was done to put an end to the lawless state of things prevailing since the expiration of the old Licensing Acts. The Stationers' Company did its best to maintain its ancient usage in the matter of duly registered 'copies', passing bye-laws forbidding any member to print, bind, or sell any book belonging to another member; but their printed regulations were as so much wastepaper. The freebooters of the press were never so openly defiant as now. They were the 'set of wretches we authors call pirates', says Addison in the *Tatler*, 'who print any book, poem, or sermon as soon as it appears in the world, in a smaller volume, and sell it, as all other thieves do stolen goods, at a cheaper rate'. Even John Dunton declines to praise when he includes 'felonious Lee'—perhaps merely for the sake of the pun—in the character sketches of his *Life and Errors*. 'Such a pirate, such a cormorant', he writes of this 'Mr. Lee of Lombard Street', 'was never before. Copies, books, men, ships, all were one; he

THE COPYRIGHT STATUTE OF ANNE

held no propriety, right or wrong, good or bad, till at last he became known; and the booksellers, not enduring so ill a man disgrace them, spewed him out, and off he marched for Ireland when he acted as felonious Lee, as he did in London.' Ireland remained more or less free to pirates until the Union of 1801, when the Copyright Act was extended to that country, thus putting end to the unauthorised editions, cheaply printed in Dublin, a surreptitiously imported into Great Britain, which had been a grievous source of trouble since the early days of printing.

The London booksellers, finding their bye-laws wholly inadequate as a means of protecting themselves against one another, applied to Parliament for a new Licensing Act in 1703, again in 1706, and for a third time in 1709, when they were at length rewarded with the Statute of Queen Anne. Tradition has it that the original Bill was drafted by Swift, whose draft was cut up by the Committee. However that may be, it did something which no other Act had ever done—it made some attempt to provide for the due recognition of the rights of authorship. Authors, as well as publishers—provided they had not parted with their property—were given the copyright of books already printed for a period of twenty-one years, dating from 10th April 1710, and no longer. New books were placed on a different footing, copyright in the case lasting only fourteen years, with the proviso that in the event of the authors surviving the said term they were to be granted another period of fourteen years. Among other things, piracy was to be punished by forfeiture and the fine of a penny per sheet, half to go to the Crown and half to the informer; and registration at Stationers' Hall was again demanded as a necessary condition of protection.

This well-meaning but, as Augustine Birrell calls it, 'perfidious measure, though it did (and for the first time) confer upon authors statutory rights in their literary property, spoilt the whole case for perpetual copyright. Hitherto the belief in this perpetuity had been general, the booksellers believing that any literary property which they purchased became theirs and their successors' for a time. Authors held the same view, and sold or retained their copyright rights accordingly. Amid all the judicial differences on the subject during the eighteenth century, said Birrell in his lectures as Quaker Professor of Law at University College, London,¹ 'there was

¹ *Seven Lectures on the Law and History of Copyright in Books*, 1899.

steady majority of judges in favour of the view that but for the Statute of Anne an author was entitled to perpetual copyright in his published work. This right (if it ever existed) the Act destroyed. Whether this judicial opinion as to the existence at Common Law of perpetual copyright in an author and his assigns was sound may well be doubted, and possibly if the House of Lords had held in *Donaldson v. Becket*¹ that perpetual copyright had survived Queen Anne, an Act of Parliament would, sooner or later, have been passed curtailing the rights of authors. But how annoying, how distressing, to have evolution artificially arrested and so interesting a question stifled by an ignorant Legislature, set in motion not by an irate populace clamouring for books . . . but by the authors and their proprietors, the booksellers'.

It is pleasant to find that while the booksellers were in the thick of their troubles in the early years of the eighteenth century they still had time and inclination to make a practice of the trade dinners. The sale dinner, like piracy itself, was something of an institution among the London booksellers long before the eighteenth century, but the earliest direct evidence of its existence is the catalogue² of the stock-in-trade of Mrs. Elizabeth Harris, deceased, to be sold at 'The Bear in Avey-Mary-Lane, on Monday the Eleventh of this Instant Decemb. 1704, Beginning at Nine in the Morning: Where the Company shall be entertained with a Breakfast; and at Noon with a good Dinner, and a Glass of Wine: and then proceed with the Sale in order to finish that Evening'. They knew the way to a man's pocket in those days. But it was a genial custom, and the friendly gossip over the nuts and wine must have done much to soften the asperities of trade competition. Nothing is more surprising than to turn from some of the stories of petty bookselling wars and personal spite to the social amenities and co-operative spirit associated with the historic Chapter Coffee House, which, in eighteenth-century publishing, filled the place occupied by the Mermaid Tavern in Elizabethan literature. The Chapter Coffee House had many literary as well as bookselling associations. Goldsmith dined there, and poor Chatterton may or may not have tasted its hospitalities. 'I am quite familiar at the Chapter Coffee House', he writes in one of his proud, boastful

¹ See pp. 190-91.

² This is one of a series of sale catalogues, 1704-68, in the possession of Longmans, Green and Company. An account of them, by the late W. H. Peet, will be found in *Notes and Queries*, 7 S. ix, 301.

letters, 'and know all the geniuses there.' In its later history Charlotte and Anne Brontë stayed there during their first visit to London after the triumphant appearance of *Jane Eyre*. The Chapter House was converted into a tavern in 1854.

Before the early Chapter Coffee House days—in the year 1719—a regular association was formed by a number of booksellers for trade purposes under the strange name of the 'Conger'—a term which, according to Nichols, 'was supposed to have been at first applied to them individually, alluding to the Conger Eel, which was said to swallow the smaller fry; or it may possibly have been taken from *Congerius*'. Whatever the origin of its name, the society itself flourished for many years. In 1736 a similar partnership was formed, under the title of the New Conger, by Charles Rivington and Arthur Bettesworth, two of the Paternoster Row booksellers. Both associations were succeeded by the Chapter Coffee House in Paternoster Row, where the old custom of co-operative publishing on the lines of the combined enterprise of the Stationers' Company under the Charter of James I—gradually developed into the systematic division of individual books, or series of books, into shares, each shareholder being responsible for his portion of the expense and receiving his proportionate number of the books at cost price or, in certain cases, his proportionate amount of the profits. Marvellous works, such as Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, were brought into the world under this co-operative system. 'Chapter Books' they were at first called; a name which subsequently gave place to 'Trade Books'.

Bookselling localities were more specialised in the early eighteenth century than at the present day. 'The booksellers of ancient books in all languages', writes Macky in his *Journey through England* (1724) 'are in Little Britain and Paternoster Row; those for divinity and the classics on the north side of St. Paul's Cathedral; law, history and plays about Temple Bar; and the French booksellers in the Strand. It seems, then, that the bookselling business has been gradually resuming its original situation near this Cathedral ever since the beginning of George I, while the neighbourhood of Duck Lane¹ and Little Britain has been proportionately falling into disuse. In its palmy days Little Britain was a favourite resort of Swift and other great bookmen and booklovers of his time. Scholars were

¹ Duck Lane was one of the arteries of Little Britain, which, like those in the neighbourhood of Paternoster Row, were given up largely to the booksellers.

there for their Greek and Latin texts; or their favourite French and Italian authors, afterwards forgathering in the old 'Mourning Bush' in Aldersgate to discuss both their spoils and the current gossip of the town. Swift mentions several visits to Christopher Bateman, one of the best known of these Little Britain booksellers, in his *Journal to Stella*. On 6th January 1711, he tells her that he 'went to Bateman's, the bookseller's, and laid out eight and forty shillings for books', for which he seems to have bought 'three little volumes of *Lucian* in French, for our Stella'. A few months later he was at the same bookseller's, 'to see a fine old library he has bought, and my finger itched as yours would do at a china shop'.

Bateman was a competent man. 'There are few booksellers in England (if any)', says Dunton, 'that understand books better than Mr. Bateman, nor does his diligence and industry come short of his honesty.' There appears to have been a custom among some of his brethren to permit customers to have the run of their shops and read the books without taking them away, for which privilege they had to pay a small subscription. Reading chairs or stools were kept in the shops for this purpose. If the books were not finished at a single sitting they were kept until the readers returned to finish them. Bateman, however, abandoned this custom. 'I suppose', he said, 'you may be a physician or an author, and want some recipe or quotation; and if you buy it I will engage it to be perfect before you leave me, but not after, as I have suffered by leaves being torn out, and the books returned to my very great loss and prejudice' (Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes*). Book lotteries, as mentioned on p. 137, were also in vogue. Swift, on 27th April 1711, tells Stella that he spent £4 7s. in thus gambling with a bookseller, winning six books in return. That Little Britain itself had long passed its prime before the middle of the eighteenth century is confirmed by Roger North, who, in 1744, regrets its vanished glories in a passage which has scarcely a good word for the booksellers of his own day.¹ In John North's time (he died in 1683), writes his biographer:

Little Britain was a plentiful and perpetual emporium of learned authors; and men went thither as to a market. This drew to the place a mighty trade; the rather because the shops were spacious, and the learned gladly resorted to them where

¹ Roger North's *Life of Dr. John North*.

they seldom failed to meet with agreeable conversation. And the booksellers themselves were knowing and conversible men, with whom, for the sake of bookish knowledge, the greatest wits were pleased to converse. And we may judge the time as well spent there, as (in latter days) either in tavern or coffee-house; though the latter hath carried off the spare hours of most people. But now this emporium is vanished, and the trade contracted into the hands of two or three persons, who, to make good their monopoly, ransack, not only their neighbours of the trade that are scattered about town, but all over England, aye, and beyond sea too, and send abroad their circulators, and in that manner get into their hands all that is valuable. The rest of the trade are content to take their refuse, with which, and the fresh scum of the press, they furnish one side of a shop, which serves for the sign of a bookseller, rather than a real one; but, instead of selling, deal as factors and procure what the country divines and gentry send for; of whom each hath his book-factor, and, when wanting anything, writes to his bookseller, and pays his bill. And it is wretched to consider what pickpocket work, with help of the press, these demi-booksellers make. They crack their brains to find out selling subjects, and keep hirelings in garrets, at hard meat, to write and correct by the great; and so puff up an octavo to a sufficient thickness, and there is six shillings current for an hour and a half's reading, and perhaps never to be read or looked upon after. One that would go higher must take his fortune at blank walls, and corners of streets, or repair to the sign of Bateman, Innys, and one or two more, where are best choice, and better pennyworths. I might touch other abuses, as bad paper, incorrect printing, and false advertising; all which and worse is to be expected, if a careful author is not at the heels of them.

This was the tribe which Pope lashed so unmercifully in the *Dunciad*, but it is only fair to add that the satirists have had matters too much their own way in this connexion. Jacob Tonson and Bernard Lintot, the two great publishers of the early eighteenth century, whatever their faults may have been, certainly helped to give a better tone to the trade. Against Lintot's benevolence and general moral character, says Dr. Young, 'there is not an insinuation'. And Jacob Tonson, as we have seen, was a very worthy fellow, in spite of his latter-day snobbery. For Tonson, after

Dryden's death in 1700—where we left him in the last chapter—had entered upon a new, and, from the social point of view, more dazzling phase in his career. He became secretary, and probably had some share in the founding, of the famous Kit Cat Club, hobnobbing with dukes and the leading men of wit and fashion among the Whigs, having his portrait painted, like every member of the Club, by Sir Godfrey Kneller, and flattering his vanity to his heart's content in the celebrated room which he built for their meetings at his own villa at Barn Elms.¹ Tonson was liked none the better by some of his friends for this illustrious association, if we are to credit the friendly criticism of Rowe, who writes, in his *Dialogue between Tonson and Congreve, in imitation of Horace*, which appeared in 1714:

While in your early days of reputation,
You for blue garters had not such a passion,
While yet you did not live, as now your trade is,
To drink with noble lords, and toast their ladies,
Thou, Jacob Tonson, were, to my conceiving,
The cheerfullest, best, honestest fellow living.

The Club was not allowed to interfere with the course of Tonson's regular business, which he was doubtless shrewd enough to see would benefit by such friendly intimacy with writers of the stamp of Addison and Steele. He had published Addison's *Poems to his Majesty* in 1695. In 1705 he issued his *Remarks on several Parts of Italy*; in 1713 his tragedy, *Cato*; and two years later his comedy, *The Drummer*, for which he paid fifty guineas. In addition, and above all these, he became, in October 1712, joint publisher of the *Spectator* with Samuel Buckley, of the Dolphin in Little Britain,² who advertised the first number in his *Daily Courant* of that date as follows: 'This day will be published a paper entitled *The Spectator*; which will be continued every day. Printed for Samuel Buckley

¹ Kneller painted his well-known series of portraits for this room—forty-eight in all—on canvas of uniform size (30 ins. × 28 ins.), a size which has ever since been known as 'Kit Cat'.

² Buckley, who owned the *Daily Courant*—the first daily newspaper to appear in England—which he had taken over from a bookseller named Mallet, was one of the best known of the early newspaper proprietors. 'He was originally a bookseller', says Dunton 'but follows printing. He is an excellent linguist, understands Latin, French, Dutch and Italian tongues, and is master of a great deal of wit. I hear he translates out of the foreign papers himself.' In 1714 he disposed of the *Daily Courant* to take over the publication of the *London Gazette*.

at the Dolphin in Little Britain, and sold by A. Baldwin in Warwick Lane.' From the sixteenth number the imprint stated that it was also sold by 'Charles Lillie, Perfumer, at the corner of Beauford Buildings in the Strand'.¹ Tonson's name as joint publisher was added from No. 499. The first two volumes of the revised edition in volume form, 'well bound and gilt, two guineas', were issued to subscribers by Buckley and Tonson in January 1712, the third and fourth following in April of the same year. In November 1712 Addison and Steele sold a half share in these four volumes, and in three others not yet published, to Jacob Tonson, junior—old Jacob's nephew and now his partner—for £575, Buckley taking the other half share for a similar sum. Two years later Tonson junior bought Buckley's half for £500. The collected edition of the *Tatler* was also published by the Tonsons, being issued at a guinea a volume on royal paper, and ten shillings on medium paper. The *Guardian* came from the same busy press. According to Pope, Steele threw down that journal on 1st October 1713, because of a quarrel with Tonson; but later authorities regard it as more likely that he gave it up in order to start a paper which would give him a wider political scope. It is significant, however, that the *Englishman, Being the Sequel of the Guardian*, the first number of which appeared on 6th October 1713, was published by Samuel Buckley.

One or two references in Steele's correspondence suggest some jovial evenings at the bookseller's shop at Gray's Inn, before the Tonsons moved in 1712 to the Shakespeare Head, in the Strand, opposite Catherine Street. Nor is it very difficult to imagine how 'genial Jacob' and 'poor Dick Steele'—as Thackeray has called him in one of the most lovable of all his portraits—became closely associated both in business and social relations. Tonson published at the end of 1701 the first of Steele's plays to be produced on the stage, *The Funeral, or Grief-à-la-Mode*, and a few years later the author is seen writing to 'dear Prue' regretting that he is 'obliged to dine at Tonson's, where after dinner some papers are to be read; whereof, among others, I am to be a judge'. In 1714 we find our 'reprehended spouse' writing to have three bottles of his wine removed from the same hospitable house. Alas! he returned this

¹ G. A. Aitken's *Life of Richard Steele*, 1889. It is added that 'there was often a note stating where sets of the back numbers could be obtained, and the increase in the names of shops mentioned shows the continued growth in the sale'.

hospitality—according to Aitken in the scholarly biography of Steele already alluded to—with a base ingratitude which no one would regret—when too late—more than Dick himself. ‘His frank, hearty nature and his love of companionship led him into temptation; like those around him he sometimes indulged in excesses at the table, and he had a natural daughter by a daughter of Tonson the publisher.’ This could not have been a daughter of Tonson I, for the elder Jacob was childless; but a daughter of the nephew and namesake whom the founder of the House took into partnership after moving to Gray’s Inn from Chancery Lane.

It is not always easy to distinguish between Jacob Tonson I and Jacob Tonson II in their business dealings after the removal to the Shakespeare Head, but as the founder appears to have retired from active business in 1720 later references may be assumed to relate to his successor. That being the case it must have fallen to Jacob Tonson II to publish the most successful of Steele’s plays, *The Conscious Lovers*, produced at Drury Lane Theatre in November 1722, and printed in December of the following year. In February 1718 Bernard Lintot had entered into an agreement with his old rivals the Tonsons—probably through Tonson junior—to become joint partners in all plays which they should buy after eighteen months following the date of that agreement, and Lintot, accordingly, bought half the copyright of *The Conscious Lovers*.

Some years before this agreement was signed, Lintot himself had negotiated with Steele for *The Lying Lover*, the copyright of which cost him £21 10s. In November 1722 both publishers issued the first collected edition of Steele’s *Dramatic Works*, part of the edition appearing with title-pages bearing the joint names of Tonson and Lintot, and part with separate title-pages. In 1722 old Jacob Tonson assigned over to his nephew the privileges of his office as stationer, bookbinder, bookseller, and printer to a number of the great public offices—privileges which he had secured in 1719–20 as some reward for his devotion to the Whigs. The younger Jacob secured a renewal of the original grant for a further term of forty years, a nice little monopoly which the Tonson family contrived to hold until the end of the century. At one time Jacob Tonson and his nephew held the privilege of printing the *Gazette*, but this was taken away from them not long after Steele lost his gazetteership.

'Mr. Addison and I have at last met', writes Swift to Stella in telling her, on 26th July 1711, of a memorable meeting at the publishers' house; 'I dined with him and Steele to-day at young Jacob Tonson's. The two Jacobs think it is I who have made the secretary take from them the privilege of the *Gazette*, which they are going to lose, and Ben Tooke and another are to have it. Jacob came to me t'other day to make his court; but I told him it was too late; and that it was not my doing.'

Swift's influence with the Tory ministers at this time was also sought by his old acquaintance Alderman Barber (afterwards Lord Mayor), for whom he had already obtained several lucrative posts. 'My printer and bookseller', he writes on 16th January 1712, 'want me to hook in another employment for them at the Tower, because it was enjoyed before by a stationer, although it be to serve the Ordnance with oil, tallow, etc., and is worth four hundred pounds per annum more. I will try what I can do. They are resolved to ask several other employments of the same nature. . . . Why am I not a stationer?'

Gulliver's Travels was the only book for which Swift ever received any payment. Hitherto his writings had been scattered, without reward, over a great number of booksellers, both in Dublin and London. *Gulliver's* birth, partly due to fear lest its political satire might have disagreeable consequences for its author, was surrounded with a vast amount of mystery. It was offered to its publisher, Benjamin Motte, by Swift himself, in a letter written in a feigned hand and signed 'Richard Sympson', ostensibly on behalf of 'my cousin, Mr. Lemuel Gulliver'. The sum of £200, he declared, was the least sum that he could receive on his cousin's account, 'because I know the author intends the profit for the use of poor seamen'. Pope had a hand in the business, but the final negotiations were conducted through Erasmus Lewis, at whose house in Cork Street, behind Burlington House, a meeting took place between 'Richard Sympson' and the publisher. *Gulliver* appeared in November 1726 and at once became the talk of the town. 'The whole impression sold in a week', wrote Gay and Pope to the author on the 17th of that month. 'It is generally said that you are the author, but I am told the bookseller declares he knows not from whose hand it came.' Motte was not able to pay the money on the date fixed, but must have satisfied the author in due course, for we find Swift writing to him in 1732 to the effect that

he was 'assured of your honest and fair dealing', and declaring that he would never publish with anyone else.

Jacob Tonson shared his printing in partnership with John Watts, with whom young Benjamin Franklin worked after his year's service at Palmer's, in Bartholomew Close. 'Here', writes Franklin in his *Autobiography*,

I continued all the rest of my stay in London. At my first admission into a printing-house I took to working at press, imagining I felt a want of the bodily exercise I had been used to in America, where press-work is mixed with the composing. I drank only water; the other workmen, near fifty in number, were great drinkers of beer. On occasion, I carried up and down stairs a large form of types in each hand, when others carried but one in both hands. They wondered to see, from this and similar instances, that the *Water American*, as they called me, was *stronger* than themselves who drank *strong* beer! We had an alehouse boy, who attended always in the house to supply the workmen. My companion at the press drank every day a pint before breakfast, a pint at breakfast with his bread and cheese, a pint between breakfast and dinner, a pint at dinner, a pint in the afternoon about six o'clock, and another when he had done his day's work. I thought it a detestable custom. . . . Watts, after some weeks, desiring to have me in the composing-room, I left the pressmen. . . . From my example, a great many of them left their muddling breakfast of beer, bread, and cheese, finding they could be supplied from a neighbouring house with a large porringer of hot water-gruel, sprinkled with pepper, crumbled with bread, and a bit of butter in it, for the price of a pint of beer, viz., three halfpence. . . . My constant attendance (I never making a St. Monday) recommended me to the master; and my uncommon quickness at composing occasioned my being put upon work of despatch, which was generally better paid. So I went on now very agreeably.

It is quite possible that Jacob Tonson, walking round the printing office with his partner, had this energetic young colonial pointed out to him—little dreaming of the part which he was destined to play in the separation of the American Colonies from the Mother Country.

One government appointment—that of printing the Votes—was shared from 1715 until 1727 between Jacob Tonson, Bernard Lintot, and William Taylor, the last of whom takes us back to Paternoster Row, and links us with one of the great publishing houses of the present day. For it was William Taylor who built up the business in Paternoster Row bought by young Thomas Longman in 1724, thus founding the firm which still bears as its emblem the dual sign of the Ship and the Black Swan. These were the signs of the two houses which Taylor had amalgamated out of the profits of *Robinson Crusoe*. The first part of that immortal tale was published on 25th April 1719, when Defoe was nearly sixty years old, and a thoroughly discredited man. Taylor's enterprise was at once rewarded, for so great was the run on the book that he had to employ several printers to cope with the demand. Three editions were exhausted within four months, bringing the publisher the handsome profit of over a thousand pounds. The second part appeared in August of the same year, and a third part, containing the *Serious Reflections of Robinson Crusoe*—now rarely printed with the narrative proper—in the following year. Taylor, publishing books in all departments of literature, continued in business until 1724, when, as already stated, he was succeeded by Thomas Longman, then in his twenty-fifth year.

Born when Dryden was still alive, and Dr. Johnson as yet unborn, Thomas Longman I was the son of a prosperous citizen of Bristol—a not insignificant fact when we remember the close connexion in later generations between the Longmans and Bristol's more famous son, Robert Southey, as well as his local bookseller friend, Joseph Cottle. Young Longman came to London in 1716 as an apprentice to John Osborn, stationer and bookseller in Lombard Street, and in due season, like the good apprentice that he was, married his master's daughter. His 'prentice days over he bought William Taylor's business for a sum which, to be exact, amounted to £2282 9s. 6d., and was not long in making his influence and energy felt in the book trade of London in the days of George I. Thirteen years before Longman stepped into Taylor's shoes was founded another historic publishing firm—the House of Rivington—Charles Rivington taking over in 1711 the business of Richard Chiswell the Elder, of the Rose and Crown, in St. Paul's Churchyard, and hoisting his own sign of the Bible and Crown in Paternoster Row, where he soon became the leading theological publisher in London.

Tonson's chief rival, however, was the Bernard Lintot already alluded to—Barnaby Bernard Lintot, to give him his name in full. He was nearly twenty years younger than Tonson senior, and was not made free of the Stationers' Company until shortly before Dryden's death. He opened his shop not long afterwards at the sign of the Cross Keys, between the Temple Gates, in Fleet Street. Among his early investments, as shown in his account-book, were a third share of Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1701), which cost him £3 4s. 6d.; a half share of Dennis's *Liberty Asserted* (1704) for £7 3s.; the whole of the same author's *Appius and Virginia* (1705) for £21 10s.; and a seventh share of Captain Cook's *Voyages* (1711), which he bought of a Mr. Gosling for £7 3s. Gay's first entry in the account-book is for his *Wife of Bath*, which cost the publisher on 12th May 1713 £25, and a later entry shows that for the revival of the *Wife of Bath* he paid another £75. The same author's *Trivia* cost him £43 in December 1715, and his *Three Hours after Marriage*, on 8th January 1717, £43 2s. 6d.

Long before this date Lintot had begun the association with Pope which, more than anything else, was to make him famous. Pope was one of old Jacob Tonson's disappointments. As early as 1706, while Pope was still in his teens, Tonson had spread his net for him in a letter of diplomatic politeness. After mentioning that he had been shown the manuscript of one of his *Pastorals*, which he thought 'extremely fine', he added: 'I remember I have formerly seen you in my shop, and am sorry I did not improve my acquaintance with you. If you design your poem for the press, no one shall be more careful in printing it, nor no one can give greater encouragement to it than, Sir,' etc. The letter succeeded, the *Pastorals* finding their way into Tonson's *Miscellany* in 1709, and Pope himself into Tonson's mixed band of 'eminent hands'. 'I shall be satisfied', he writes on 20th May 1709, to Wycherley, who had introduced him to town life, 'if I can lose my time agreeably this way, without losing my reputation. I can be content with a bare saving game, without being thought an *eminent hand* (with which little Jacob has graciously dignified his adventurers and volunteers in poetry). Jacob creates poets, as kings do knights, not for their honour, but for their money.'

'You will make *Jacob's Ladder* raise you to immortality', was Wycherley's reply. But the young and inconstant Pope not only took his anonymous *Essay on Criticism* to an obscure bookseller named

Lewis,¹ who published it in 1711, but allowed the first edition of the *Rape of the Lock*, besides other pieces, to appear in Bernard Lintot's rival *Miscellanies* in 1712. This was the beginning of a regular connexion which may be clearly traced in Lintot's account-book. Here are some of the items and the amounts paid for them by the publisher:

	£	s.	d.
<i>Windsor Forest</i> (Feb. 1713). . . .	32	5	0
<i>Ode on St. Cecilia's Day</i> (July 1713) . . .	15	0	0
Additions to the <i>Rape</i> (Feb. 1714) . . .	15	0	0
<i>Temple of Fame</i> (Feb. 1715)	32	5	0
<i>Key to the Lock</i> (April 1715)	10	15	0

More important than all these was Pope's acceptance of Lintot's offer in 1714 to publish his translation of Homer's *Iliad*, on terms which were far in advance of anything that Tonson had ever paid Dryden. Pope and his friends had already ensured its financial success by securing a list of subscribers of unprecedented strength. The poet had issued his proposals for the translation in October 1713, and Swift worked as hard as anyone to secure the support of his political friends; but the leaders of both parties were included in the list, together with a host of patrons among the nobility. Lintot paid Pope £200 for each of the six volumes, and supplied him free of cost with all the copies for his subscribers, as well as presentation copies.

Bookselling by subscription on these lines continued right through the eighteenth century, authors issuing their 'Proposals' themselves, and getting as many influential friends as possible to tout for subscribers. It was the next thing, indeed, to becoming their own publishers, but though it occasionally accounted for such sums as were received in this way by Pope, it did not tend to increase the dignity of the profession. 'He that asks subscriptions', said Johnson, who made a bed of thorns for himself when he undertook

¹ Lewis was a Catholic bookseller in Covent Garden. Isaac d'Israeli, in his *Quarrels of Authors*, tells the following story in this connexion. 'From a descendant of this Lewis', he writes, 'I heard that Pope, after publication, came every day, persecuting with anxious inquiries the cold impenetrable bookseller, who, as the poem lay uncalled for, saw nothing but vexatious importunities in a troublesome youth. One day Pope, after nearly a month's publication, entered, and in despair tied up a number of the poems, which he addressed to several who had a reputation in town as judges of poetry. The scheme succeeded, and the poem, having reached its proper circle, soon got into request.' In 1716 a new edition was published conjointly by Lewis and Lintot, the last of whom paid £25 for the privilege.

the subscription edition of *Shakespeare* in the middle of the century, 'soon finds that he has enemies. All who do not encourage him defame him.' And gradually the system fell into disuse, subscribing, with occasional exceptions, being now left to the publisher.

According to Johnson, Pope received altogether for the *Iliad* sums amounting to £5320, though the publisher's own memorandum-book, quoted by Nichols, makes the total not much more than £4000. Lintot apparently was not so happy in his bargain. 'It is unpleasant to relate', says Nichols in his *Literary Anecdotes*, 'that the bookseller, after all his hopes, and all his liberality, was, by a very unjust and illegal action, defrauded of his profit. An edition of the *Iliad* was printed in Holland in duodecimo and imported clandestinely for the gratification of those who were impatient to read what they could not afford to buy.'¹ This action compelled Lintot to bring out a still cheaper edition, which seems to have had a very large sale, but at a price so low as not to be profitable. It was the *Iliad* which led to Pope's so-called quarrel with Addison, whom he unjustly suspected of being the real author of Tickell's version of the same work, the first volume of which was published by Tonson three days after the announcement that Pope had finished the first volume of his translation.

For the copyright of the *Odyssey* for which Pope issued his proposals in January 1725, Lintot paid only half the sum he had been ready to give for the *Iliad*, and trouble ensued in connexion with the poet's collaborators, William Browne and Elijah Fenton. Pope's profits amounted to £4500, out of which he had to pay Browne and Fenton something like £700. Pope and Browne called Lintot a scoundrel, and other harsh names, because he declined to provide free copies for Browne's subscribers as well as Pope's; Lintot threatened a suit in Chancery; and the end of it all was their separation, and the poet's ignoble taunt in the *Dunciad*. Accounts differ, however, as to the real origin of Pope's spite against Lintot. 'Undoubtedly', says Nichols, 'at this time Pope had conceived a very ill impression of his *quondam* bookseller. His principal delinquency seems to have been that he was a stout man, clumsily made, not a very considerable scholar, and that he filled his shop with rubric posts.' Pope refers more than once

¹ Lintot's original edition was published at a guinea for each of the six volumes. The first volume appeared in June 1715; the last in May 1720.

to these bookseller's posts, adorned with red advertisements of the latest publications:

What though my name stood rubric on the walls,
Or plastered posts, with clasps, in capitals.

Which takes us back to Ben Jonson's good-humoured protest against the pushful practices of the trade in one of his *Epigrams*, and farther back still to the advertisement posts of the bookshops of ancient Rome.

Among other works published by Lintot were poems and plays by Farquhar, Fenton, and Rowe—to whom he paid £50 15s. for *Jane Shore*, and £75 5s. for *Lady Jane Grey*. When he retired, evidently in comfortable circumstances, he settled down in some considerable style in Sussex. Here, in November 1735, he was nominated High Sheriff for the county, but, dying in the following February, was succeeded in that office by his son Henry, who carried on his father's business until his own death in 1758.

Pope, to hark back to earlier days, returned for a time to his old publishers, the Tonsons, to edit their edition of Shakespeare in 1725, for which he was paid, roughly, £217. The edition was not particularly successful. Only about 600 copies were sold at the original price, out of a total edition of 750, the balance having to be 'remaindered'. 'Old Jacob Tonson', wrote Pope to a correspondent in 1731, 'is the perfect image and likeness of Bayle's Dictionary, so full of matter, secret history, and wit and spirit, at almost fourscore.' Tonson had retired ten or eleven years before this, leaving the business to be carried on by his nephew and namesake. Like Thomas Guy, the elder Tonson had amassed, apart from any profits that he may have made as a publisher, a large fortune by South Sea stock and other investments, notably in Law's Mississippi Scheme. He died within two months of his old rival Bernard Lintot—on 2nd April 1736.

Outwardly they were a curious, misshapen breed of men, these early publishers of the eighteenth century, if we are to accept the lines which have handed them down to posterity. Dryden, in one of his financial squabbles with Tonson, who would not satisfy all his demands for money, is said to have sent him the following lines, with the threatening message: 'Tell the dog that he who wrote these lines can write more':

With leering looks, bull-faced, and freckled fair;
 With two left legs and Judas-coloured hair,
 And frowzy pores, that taint the ambient air.

The lines are from a satirical fragment attributed to Dryden and preserved in a Tory poem published as a joint attack on the Kit Cat Club and its bookseller-secretary. Jacob's unfortunate legs proved an irresistible mark for the satirist, for we find them again in Pope's *Dunciad*, following his protrait of 'great Lintot':

As when a dab-chick waddles through the copse
 On feet and wings, and flies, and wades, and hops;
 So lab'ring on, with shoulders, hands, and head,
 Wide as a windmill, all his figure spread,
 With arms expanded, Bernard rows his state,
 And left-legg'd Jacob seems to emulate.

Himself misshapen—'a crooked mind in a crooked body'—Pope, as he dipped his pen in gall, seemed to gloat over any physical peculiarity in his victims. But Pope could not be more virulent in this respect than Thomas Amory, when damning Curll to unenviable immortality. 'Curll', writes Amory, in his curious autobiographical romance of *John Bunce*, 'was in person very tall and thin—an ungainly, awkward, white-faced man. His eyes were a light grey—large, projecting, goggle, and purblind. He was splay-footed and baker-kneed'—whatever baker-kneed may be. 'He was a debauchee to the last degree', adds the same authority, 'and so injurious to society, that by filling his translations with wretched notes, forged letters, and bad pictures, he raised the price of a four shilling book to ten. Thus, in particular, he managed Burnet's *Archæology*. And when I told him he was very culpable in this and other articles he sold, his answer was, "what would I have him to do?" He was a bookseller; his translators in pay lay three in a bed at the Pewter Platter Inn, in Holborn, and he and they were for ever at work to deceive the public. He likewise printed the lewdest things. . . . As to drink, he was too fond of money to spend any in making himself happy that way; but at another's expense he would drink every day till he was quite blind and as incapable as a block. This was Edmund Curll. But he died at last as great a penitent (I think in the year 1748) as ever expired. I mention this to his glory.'

'Left-legged Jacob'—or 'Genial Jacob', as Pope calls him in another passage—suffered from the *Dunciad* less than most of the unfortunate booksellers with whom 'Pope Alexander' had any dealings. Edmund Curll, his particular *bête noire* in the bookselling world, was better able to retaliate than Tonson or Lintot. Pope 'has a knack at versifying' admitted Curll, with consummate coolness, when called to appear at the Bar of the House for publishing his enemy's correspondence, 'but in prose I think myself a match for him'; and indeed he did his best, all through his long squabble with the irascible poet, to give as good as he received. His unabashed retaliations probably amused his contemporaries as much as Pope's venomous abuse, but posterity only remembers the *Dunciad*'s unsavoury description:

Obscure with filth the miscreant lies bewrayed,
Fall'n in the plash his wickedness had laid.

Curll had been trained in the unprotected days when a bookseller, were he so minded, could break all bounds of decency and honour with little risk of the law's interference. Curll and Pope had been deadly enemies years before the affair of the letters. The feud began with the *Court Poems*, published in the spring of 1716 by James Roberts, of Warwick Lane, though the profits, apparently, were to be divided between Curll and two other booksellers, John Oldmixon and John Pemberton. This was the privately printed edition of the pieces by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, afterwards published as *Town Eclogues*. We need not give the whole of its complicated history, with the side issue of its effect on the relations between Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Pope. Curll and Pope have both given their own versions of the so-called 'poisoning', which the poet inflicted on the publisher when he heard that Curll had had a hand in the publication of the book. Pope's *Full and True Account of a Horrid and Barbarous Revenge by Poison on the Body of Mr. Edmund Curll, Bookseller, with a faithful Copy of his last Will and Testament*, was published in Pope and Swift's *Miscellanies*, and much of it will hardly bear reprinting, but the following passages may be quoted:

History furnishes us with Examples of many Satyrical Authors who have fallen Sacrifices to Revenge, but not of any Booksellers that I know of, except the unfortunate Subject of the following

Paper; I mean Mr. Edmund Curll, at the Bible and Dial in Fleetstreet, who was yesterday poison'd by Mr. Pope, after having liv'd many Years an Instance of the mild Temper of the British Nation. Every Body knows that the said Mr. Edmund Curll, on Monday the 26th Instant, publish'd a Satyrical Piece, entituled Court Poems, in the preface whereof they were attributed to a Lady of Quality, Mr. Pope, or Mr. Gay; by which indiscreet Method, though he had escap'd one Revenge, there were still two behind in reserve. Now on the Wednesday ensuing, between the Hours of Ten and Eleven, Mr. Lintott, a neighb'ring Bookseller, desir'd a Conference with Mr. Curll about settling a Title-Page, inviting him at the same Time to take a Whet together. Mr. Pope, (who is not the only Instance how Persons of bright Parts may be carry'd away by the Instigation of the Devil) found means to convey himself into the same Room, under the pretence of Business with Mr. Lintott, who it seems is the Printer of his Homer. This Gentleman, with seeming Coolness, reprimanded Mr. Curll for wrongfully ascribing to him the aforesaid Poems: He excused himself by declaring that one of his Authors (Mr. Oldmixon by Name) gave the Copies to the Press, and wrote the Preface. Upon this Mr. Pope (being to all appearance reconcil'd) very civilly drank a Glass of Sack to Mr. Curll, which he as civilly pledged; and tho' the liquor in Colour and Taste differ'd not from common Sack, yet was it plain by the Pangs this unhappy Stationer felt soon after, that some poisonous Drug had been secretly infused therein.

In a note in the *Dunciad* the same poet alleged that, 'being first threaten'd and afterwards punish'd for intending to publish the *Court Poems* as by "A Lady of Quality", Curll transferred it from her to him, and has now printed it twelve years in his name'. Curll retorted in the *Curliad* by declaring that the whole of this charge was false.

The matter of fact [he writes] stands thus: About the year 1715, Mr. Joseph Jacobs (late of Hoxton, the Founder of a Remarkable Sect called the Whiskers) gave to Mr. John Oldmixon three Poems at that time handed about, entituled The Bassett Table, The Toilet, and The Drawing Room. These Pieces were printed in Octavo, and published by Mr. James Roberts, near

the Oxford Arms in Warwick Lane, under the Title of Court Poems. The Profit arising from the Sale was equally to be divided between Mr. John Oldmixon, Mr. John Pemberton (a Bookseller of Parliamentary Note in Fleet Street, tho' he has not had the good fortune to be immortalized in the Dunciad), and myself. And I am sure my Brother Lintot will, if asked, declare this to be the same state of the Case I laid before Mr. Pope, when he sent for me to the Swan Tavern in Fleet Street to enquire after this Publication. My brother Lintot drank his half Pint of Old Hock, Mr. Pope his half Pint of Sack, and I the same quantity of an Emetic Potion (which was the punishment referred to by our Commentator), but no threatenings past. Mr. Pope, indeed, said, that Satires should not be printed (tho' he has now changed his mind). I answered, they should not be wrote, for if they were, they would be printed. He replied, Mr. Gay's Interest at Court would be greatly hurt by publishing these Pieces. This was all that passed in our Triumvirate. We then parted, Pope and my brother Lintot went together, to his Shop, and I went home and vomited heartily. I then despised the Action and have since in another manner sufficiently Purged the Author of it. In the Advertisement prefixt to the Court Poems, the Hearsay of the Town is only recited, some attributing them to a Lady of Quality, others to Mr. Gay, but the Country-confirmation was (Chelsea being named) that the Lines could come from no other hand than the laudable Translator of Homer. This is a Demonstration of the Falschood of our Commentator's Assertion, that any transfer was made, from a Lady to Mr. Pope, they being originally charged upon him as his lawful issue; and so I shall continue his Fame, having lately printed a new edition of them and added them to his Letters, which come next under consideration.

Before dealing with Pope's *Letters*, however, it may be as well to say something more about Curll's earlier record. The year in which the memorable meeting took place in the Swan Tavern, in Fleet Street, saw the bookseller tossed in a blanket by the Westminster scholars for printing, without permission, a funeral oration delivered by the captain of the school. The story of his humiliation at their hands is best told in the following letter, which is printed by W. J. Thoms from the *St. James's Post* of that year:

KING'S COLLEGE, WESTMINSTER.

August 3, 1716.

SIR,—You are desired to acquaint the public that a certain bookseller near Temple Bar, not taking warning by the frequent drubs that he has undergone for his often pirating other men's copies, did lately, without the consent of Mr. John Barber, present Captain of Westminster School, publish the scraps of a Funeral Oration, spoken by him over the corpse of the Rev. Dr. South. And being on Thursday last fortunately nabbed within the limits of Dean's Yard, by the King's Scholars there, he met with a college salutation, for he was first presented with the ceremony of the blanket, in which, when the skeleton had been well shook, he was carried in triumph to the School; and after receiving a grammatical construction for his false concords, he was reconducted to Dean's Yard, and on his knees asking pardon of the aforesaid Mr. Barber for his offence, he was kicked out of the Yard, and left to the huzzas of the rabble.

I am, Sir, yours, etc.

T. A.

In the same unlucky year Curll also made his first appearance at the Bar of the House of Lords. This was for printing an account of the trial for high treason of the Earl of Wintoun, the privilege of which had been granted to Jacob Tonson, who had issued it at a price which only a monopolist could afford to charge. Curll's attempt at underselling brought him on his knees before the Lord Chancellor, but the reprimand which he then received does not appear to have had any permanent effect, for he was at once busy again in other disreputable practices.

Both Nichols and Thoms, without seriously attempting to white-wash the character of 'the infamous, the dauntless, the shameless Edmund Curll'—as Lord Campbell called him in his speech of 28th July 1845, when the order against publishing the works, life, or last will of any member of the House of Lords was rescinded¹—have made some attempt to show that he was not quite so black as he was painted, but when all is said and done in his favour he remains an ugly blot on the history of eighteenth-century book-

¹ Curll paid his second visit to the House of Lords in 1722 for announcing that he intended to publish the late Duke of Buckingham's works; which led to the passing of the Standing Order forbidding any publication of the kind without the authority of a peer's executors, or other legal representative.

selling. On 30th November 1725 he was convicted of 'printing and publishing several obscene and immodest books, greatly tending to the corruption and degradation of manners', including *The Nun in her Smock*, but was not, as commonly stated, 'set in the pillory as he well deserved' for this offence, but, after five months' imprisonment, fined fifty marks and kept in surety of £100 for his good behaviour for one year. It was for the political offence of publishing the *Memoirs of John Ker of Kersland*, as W. J. Thoms clearly proves, that he was ordered, at the same time, 'to pay a fine of twenty marks, to stand in the pillory for the space of one hour, and his own recognizance to be taken for his good behaviour for another year'.

The Dunciad, in which Curll was pilloried after another fashion, made its appearance with all the air of mystery with which both Pope and Swift delighted to surround the origin of their satires. It was published anonymously on 28th May 1728, professing to be the work of a friend of Pope, and a reprint of a Dublin edition. How great a stir it made in London on its publication is seen in a contemporary account attributed to Pope himself, though said to have been written by Richard Savage:

On the day the book was first vended a crowd of authors besieged the shop; entreaties, advices, threats of law and battery, nay, cries of treason, were all employed to hinder the coming out of *The Dunciad*. On the other side, the booksellers and hawkers made as great an effort to procure it. What could a few poor authors do against so great a majority as the public! There was no stopping a torrent with a finger, so out it came. Many ludicrous circumstances attended it. The Dunces (for by this name they were called) held weekly clubs to consult of hostilities against the author. One wrote a letter to a great Minister, that Mr. Pope was the greatest enemy the Government had; and another bought his image in clay, to execute him in effigy; with which sad sort of satisfaction the gentlemen were a little comforted. Some false editions of the book having an owl in their frontispiece; the true one, to distinguish it, fixed in its stead an ass laden with authors. Then another surreptitious one being printed with the same ass, the new edition in octavo returned for distinction to the owl again. Hence arose a great contest of booksellers against booksellers, and advertisements against

advertisements; some recommending the edition of the owl, and others the edition of the ass, by which names they came to be distinguished, to the great honour also of the gentlemen of *The Dunciad*.

Pope published the enlarged edition of the *Dunciad* in March 1729, assigning the property to Lord Bathurst, Lord Burlington, and Lord Oxford, and copies could only be obtained through them. Later in the same year, when there seemed to be no longer any risk of publication, they re-assigned the property to Lawton Gilliver, who, having now become Pope's publisher, issued a new edition in November, though Pope himself did not openly acknowledge the poem until it appeared in his *Collected Works* in 1735. The complete history of the publication of Pope's correspondence, in which the poet, by tortuous intrigues which were quite beyond the ingenuity of the bookseller, surreptitiously made Curll his publisher, and then had him summoned before the House of Lords, would fill a whole chapter by itself. The true facts have only come to light within comparatively recent years, but there is no doubt that Pope merely used Curll in this matter in order that he might gratify his insatiable vanity by publishing an authorised edition of his letters. Curll had published in 1726 the *Familiar Letters* addressed by Pope in his youth to his friend Henry Cromwell, the originals of which had been bought by the bookseller for ten guineas from a Mrs. Thomas, who had been Cromwell's mistress. Whether Pope seriously objected to the publication of these letters or not does not matter. They undoubtedly suggested Curll as the agent who should publish his *Literary Correspondence for Thirty Years*. This appeared in 1735, and Pope secretly arranged that the collection should be announced as including a number of letters of Peers, which he knew to be an offence against the law. Though careful enough to arrange that no such letters were actually sent to Curll for the purpose, Pope nevertheless saw to it that the books were seized on publication by a warrant from the House of Lords, and the publisher himself summoned to explain what he meant by his advertisement. Curll in defence pleaded ignorance. He explained that the advertisement was sent to him with instructions to copy it and have it inserted in the papers. All he knew about the person who sent it was that he signed himself 'P. T.' He told the Lords that he wrote to Pope to acquaint him that a Gentleman, who

signed himself 'P. T.', had offered him a large collection of his (Pope's) letters to print. 'That Mr. Pope did not send him any answer to his letter, but put an Advertisement in *The Daily Post Boy*, that he had received such a letter from E. C. That he knew no such person as P. T. That he believ'd nobody had such a collection of letters, but that it was a Forgery, and that he should not trouble himself about it; And then read an Advertisement which he put into *The Post Boy* in answer to the said Advertisement of Mr. Pope.'¹

In the end, the Lords, finding that the book did not, as announced, contain any letters of Peers, and thus was not contrary to the Standing Order of the House referred to in a footnote to p. 158, dismissed the publisher and ordered the copies to be returned to him. The Lords and the bookseller, however, had served Pope's purpose, and he at once proceeded to prepare his 'authorised' edition. Curll, nothing abashed, and determined also to profit by the publicity given to the affair, boldly announced his intention to publish a third volume:

The Third Volume of Mr. Pope's Literary Correspondence, I shall publish next Month, ORIGINALS being every day sent to me, some of them, to a certain DUCHESS, which I am ready to produce under his own Hand. I know not what Honours Mr. Pope would have conferr'd on him:—1st I have hung up his Head for my Sign; and, 2ndly, I have engraved a fine view of his House, Gardens, etc., from Mr. Rijsbrack's Painting, which will shortly be publish'd. But if he aims at any further Artifices, he never found himself more mistaken than he will in trifling with Me.

And Curll was as good as his word. He added volume after volume—with much extraneous matter—until he had a whole series of six in stock; and in the fifth of these he had the effrontery to criticise the textual accuracy—not without a certain amount of truth—of Pope's authorised edition. 'Many considerable passages are omitted', he declares, among other things; 'others are interpolated; and upon the whole the *Genuine Edition* is so far from an *authentic one* that it is only a *Select Collection* of Mr. Pope's Letters, more old letters being omitted than new ones added.' Pope's own edition appeared in May 1737 and the copyright was bought by

¹ From the Proceedings in the *Lords' Journals*.

Robert Dodsley, the publisher who may be said to have followed old Jacob Tonson in the 'apostolic succession'. Jacob, now spending his last days in retirement, lived until the following April, surviving his nephew and successor rather more than four months, the business being carried on by the son of Jacob Tonson Junior—Jacob Tonson III. Bernard Lintot had also been succeeded by his son Henry, but the great traditions of both houses were passing away.



THE FIRST SEAL OF THE STATIONERS' COMPANY

This was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. It represented St. John behind a shield bearing the Company's arms, with his eagle on his right. It also illustrated the legend that on a poisoned cup being given him to drink St. John made over it the sign of the Cross, thus causing the poison to issue forth in the form of a serpent.

IN DR. JOHNSON'S DAY

IT was a ripe moment for the right man, and Robert Dodsley, who holds a place apart in the bookselling annals of the eighteenth century, made the most of his opportunity. The generality of his craft in that Golden Age may be roughly divided into two distinct classes. To one of these belonged such notorious members as Edmund Curll, and his lineal descendant, Ralph Griffiths, who tortured poor Goldsmith's soul in his poverty-stricken Grub Street days. The other class included such publishers as Bernard Lintot and Jacob Tonson, men who were practically the fathers of the modern book trade, possessing the first real sense of the rights of authorship and a respect for the dignity of letters. None of these, however, had anything of the true literary instinct, and it was this possession which gave Robert Dodsley his unique position.

He strayed into poetry while still in his footman's livery. It was probably because he did not disguise this fact that his earliest appearances in print, beginning with *Servitude* in 1729, and including *A Muse in Livery*; or, *The Footman's Miscellany* (1732), won for him many influential friends, not only among people of quality, to whom anything in the shape of a novelty was welcome, but among such authors as Defoe and Pope. Defoe, who was then sixty-eight, took an interest in the footman-poet from the first, young Dodsley having found some means of obtaining access to him. According to Lee's *Life of Daniel Defoe* (1869), he 'not only revised the poem [*Servitude*], but also—seeing it would not fill a sheet, wrote a preface and introduction of some ten pages, and then kindly added, as a postscript, six pages of quiet banter on his own popular tract [his recently published *Every Body's Business*], in order to give his humble protégé the reflex benefit of such popularity'. It is probable that he also assisted in the publication of the pamphlet which was issued by the bookseller Thomas Worrall. Success turned Dodsley's ambitious thoughts to playwriting. He wrote *The Toy-Shop*, and after issuing his *Muse in Livery* in 1732, ventured to send the play to Pope for his opinion as to its merits. Pope did more than Dodsley asked him; he recommended it to John Rich, who was then

preparing to move to his new theatre in Covent Garden. It is not difficult to imagine Dodsley's delight when he read Pope's letter.

If fame and fortune were not already within his grasp, they were near enough to justify the doffing of his lackey's livery. Exactly when he left service, however, or what he did personally before embarking, in 1735, upon his career as a bookseller, is not known. As for the *Toy-Shop*, which he described as a 'dramatic satire', it was not produced on the stage until 3rd February of that year; but it scored an immediate success, and did even better when published, for the first time, three days later, by Lawton Gilliver, Pope's latest publisher, who had already issued several small volumes of Dodsley's verse. The book went through four editions within its first two months, and was only taken over by Dodsley himself when it reached its eighth edition. More important than the number of its editions, it secured for Dodsley, according to his biographer, Ralph Straus,¹ the money he needed, 'and with that, his own small savings, and a present from Mr. Pope he was enabled to start upon the career which must of all others have appealed to him'.

The new publisher made an appropriate start on 17th May 1735, at Tully's Head, in Pall Mall—soon to become famous as a favourite haunt of distinguished booklovers and literary men—with a share in the second volume of Pope's *Works*, the other partners being Gilliver, whose address was at Homer's Head, in Fleet Street, and J. Brindley, of 29 New Bond Street. Pope had at last found a publisher after his own heart. 'I beg you', he writes to the elder Duncombe on 8th May of that year, 'to accept of the new volume of my things, just printed, which will be delivered you by Mr. Dodsley, the author of the *Toy-Shop*, who has just set up as a bookseller; and I doubt not, as he has more sense, so will have more honesty, than most of [that] profession.' The bookseller was not ungrateful for Pope's patronage, and sincerely mourned the poet's death in 1744.

Dodsley had his occasional disputes with authors, but they were few and far between. His own literary gifts helped him no doubt, but the reason for his success in this field is not easy to appreciate to-day. His poems are as dead as his ill-starred literary journal, the *Public Register*; and his contemporary vogue as a playwright is difficult to understand. The real reason for his popularity in the literary world was that he had a 'way' with him which almost

¹ *Robert Dodsley, Poet, Publisher, and Playwright*, 1910.

everybody liked. Perhaps it was because he was never ashamed to admit that he began life as a footman. 'You know how decent, humble, inoffensive a creature Dodsley is; how little apt to forget or disguise his having been a footman', writes his friend Horace Walpole to George Montagu on one occasion, when telling him how Dr. John Brown had been ill-mannered enough to reply to one of Dodsley's letters with a card saying, 'Footman's language I never return.'

Brown's mind was none too well balanced, or probably he would never have done such a thing; for the publisher-poet, as Sir Edmund Gosse says in a letter quoted by Straus, 'was just "Doddy"—everybody's friend, in love with books and bookish people, a delightful, serviceable, bourgeoisie personality'. Lord Chesterfield and Lord Lyttelton, as well as Sir Robert Walpole, were among the bookseller's earliest patrons. Rivals watched the rapid progress of the rising star with envy and uncharitableness. Curll could not forbear to show his malice in the lines which he addressed to Pope in 1737, when that poet made over to Dodsley the sole right in the publication of his letters:

'Tis kind indeed a Livery Muse to aid,
Who scribbles farces to augment his trade.

To Dodsley belongs the place of honour in the great group of booksellers attracted by that magnetic personality, Samuel Johnson—just as their less scrupulous predecessors revolved round Shakespeare and Ben Jonson a century before. Dodsley's shop was already fashionable when Johnson, then practically unknown, went to him on the matter of the anonymous *London*. Later, like many other distinguished men of letters, he was to share in the social gatherings of wit and fashion which Dodsley delighted to encourage at his hospitable Tully's Head. 'The true Noctes Atticæ are revived at honest Dodsley's house', he afterwards said. But for the moment he was only an outsider, ostensibly acting for an unknown author friend. Himself the son of a bookseller he knew something of the hardships and uncertainties of the trade, and always had a good word to say for it. His early experience was mainly confined to his father's shop at Lichfield, and Warren's at Birmingham, where, after leaving Oxford, and his dreary days as usher at Market Bosworth Grammar School ended, he lodged when staying with his

friend Hector. Warren was the first established bookseller in Birmingham. When Michael Johnson started in business at Lichfield, as Boswell tells us, 'booksellers' shops in the provincial towns of England were very rare, so that there was not one even in Birmingham, in which town old Mr. Johnson used to open a shop every market-day'. Michael Johnson carried his books in the same way to Uttoxeter, and it was here that Dr. Johnson, in his old age, performed his penance for his youthful pride in refusing to accompany his father to market. The story as told by Boswell bears repeating:

To Henry White, a young clergyman, with whom he now formed an intimacy, so as to talk with him with great freedom, he mentioned that he could not in general accuse himself of having been an undutiful son. 'Once, indeed', said he, 'I was disobedient; I refused to attend my father to Uttoxeter market. Pride was the source of that refusal, and the remembrance of it was painful. A few years ago I desired to atone for this fault; I went to Uttoxeter in very bad weather, and stood for a considerable time bare-headed in the rain, on the spot where my father's stall used to stand. In contrition I stood, and I hope the penance was expiatory.'

It was for Warren, the Birmingham bookseller, that Johnson's first prose work was written—his translation of Lobo's *Voyage to Abyssinia*, for which the bookseller paid him five guineas. The work was published in 1735, with 'London' printed on the title-page, though in reality it came from a local press in Birmingham; but this, says Boswell, was 'a device too common with provincial publishers'. When Johnson moved to London in 1738 he obtained his first regular employment from the publisher Edward Cave, who had founded the *Gentleman's Magazine* seven years previously, and carried it on under the name of *Sylvanus Urban*,¹ but it was Dodsley who gave him his real introduction to the great reading public in town. Johnson submitted his *London* to Cave, who forwarded the poem to Dodsley, and Johnson, still preserving the pretence of being merely a friend of the author, called anxiously at Tully's Head to know the result. As he told Cave in one of his letters on the subject, the mysterious author was then 'under very disadvantageous cir-

¹ Cave was subsequently the printer of Johnson's *Rambler*.

cumstances of fortune'. Then came the letter to the printer with the joyful news that Dodsley was willing to publish the poem:

I was to-day with Mr. Dodsley, who declares very warmly in favour of the paper you sent him, which he desires to have a share in, it being, as he says, a creditable thing to be concerned in. I knew not what answer to make till I had consulted you, nor what to demand on the author's part, but am very willing that, if you please, he should have a part in it, as he will undoubtedly be more diligent to disperse and promote it. If you can send me word to-morrow what I shall say to him, I will settle matters, and bring the poem with me for the press, which, as the town empties, we cannot be too quick with.

The result was a further meeting between Dodsley and Johnson, at which he gave Johnson ten much-needed guineas. 'I might perhaps have accepted less', said the author to Boswell, years afterwards, in relating this incident, 'but that Paul Whitehead had a little before got ten guineas for a poem; and I would not take less than Paul Whitehead.' Whitehead's poem—his satire, *Manners*—cost its publisher a good deal more than ten guineas before he had done with it, for early in the following year the Lords voted the piece 'scandalous', and a libel on several members of the House. In the absence of the author Dodsley was kept in prison for a week, at a cost of £70 in fees, but was then released through the intercession of influential friends, after being brought to the Bar of the House, where, upon his knees, he received a final reprimand for his offence from the Lord Chancellor.

An interesting experiment was started about this time, which, though outside the regular course of bookselling, deserves some mention. In 1736, the year after Dodsley opened his shop at Tully's Head under such influential patronage, the trade was threatened with another form of competition. This was an association nominally called 'The Society for the Encouragement of Learning', and aiming, among other things, 'to assist authors in the publication, and to secure them the entire profits of their own works'. The scheme had for its president the Duke of Richmond, and its Committee of Management included other noblemen and scholars of the highest rank, as well as Paul Whitehead and James Thomson as representatives of professional authorship.

It began with a flourish of trumpets, a membership of over a hundred, and a secretary, one Alexander Gordon, who is said to have 'made a trial of all the ways by which a man could get an honest livelihood'; but whose correspondence, so far as we have seen it, does little credit to his tact. 'You have no doubt heard', he writes to Dr. Richardson, Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge—whose assistance he sought in order to secure the offer of Dr. Middleton's *Life of Cicero*—'in what a discouraging way Dr. Bentley has used our Society: for, though his work of *Manilius* was ready to be printed, and he desired by several persons to have it published by the Society, he not only raised such ill-grounded objections against the institution itself, but chose to throw it into the hands of a common bookseller, than in those of the Society, which has not only made several gentlemen of letters and high life exclaim against the discouraging and ungenerous act, but will be recorded to the learned world when he is dead and rotten.'

It is hardly surprising that the Society did not meet with much encouragement from the 'common booksellers', though a few chosen members of the regular trade were at various times appointed to act for it, and issue such works as fell into his hands. Not meeting with much success by these means the Society appointed its own retail booksellers in different parts of London, allowing them fifteen per cent on all the Society's publications that they sold; but its affairs were never flourishing. Even Thomson, though a member of the committee, would not leave his old friend Andrew Millar, who had published his *Seasons* in 1730, not long after opening his shop near St. Clement's Church in the Strand. Millar remained Thomson's publisher until the poet's death in 1748. The Society for the Encouragement of Learning, in spite of all the drawbacks, made a brave and generous struggle against odds for thirteen years, publishing, among other things, Carte's *Original Letters*, Roe's *State Papers*, and Bishop Tanner's *Notitia Monastica*, and *Bibliotheca Britannica*. According to Knight, who dwells on the incident with a professional satisfaction which would not be unpardonable were he strictly accurate in his facts, the Society 'made an end without publishing any work that had a chance of being profitable either to author or bookseller, and it left to some of its patrons, irresponsible or not, a legacy of two thousand pounds debt'.

A very different version of the Society's end is given by William Jerdan in a pamphlet published in 1838, and based on the manu-

script volumes of the Society's Proceedings, now in the British Museum. From this it appears that the distinguished promoters of the scheme 'closed their humane and honoured exertions by balancing the accounts of the association and bestowing the residue of their funds upon that noble charity, the Foundling Hospital. At this time the Duke of Leeds was President, and the sum so congenially appropriated was £24 12s.—the last legacy from the Foundlings of Literature to the hardly more forlorn Foundlings of Benevolence'.

Though Johnson's *London*—to return to our story—proved a great success, it was nine years before Dodsley published anything else of his; but then it was to be associated with him in the great *Dictionary*, which Dodsley appears, indeed, to have been the first to suggest. He was not only one of the 'gentlemen partners' in this arduous enterprise, but also the one with whom alone the lexicographer did not pick a quarrel. 'He invariably', writes Ralph Straus, 'caused Dodsley to act as intermediary during the many little quarrels and disagreements which arose during the seven years of toil.' We all know the story of the mutual satisfaction expressed by Johnson and one of the other partners, Andrew Millar, when the last sheet was at length received from the unpunctual author. 'Thank God, I have done with him!' exclaimed Millar, upon whom had fallen the chief responsibility of seeing the work through the press. 'I am glad', said Johnson, when this remark was repeated to him, 'that he thanks God for anything.'

This, however, was not Johnson's final opinion of Millar, who, 'though himself no great judge of literature', says Boswell, 'had good sense enough to have for his friends very able men to give him their opinions and advice in the purchase of copyright; the consequence of which was his acquiring a very large fortune, with great liberality.' Johnson said of him, 'I respect Millar, sir; he has raised the price of literature.' Next to Dodsley, Millar was the best-known publisher of his day. He was Fielding's publisher as well as Thomson's, and, with the histories of Robertson and Hume, played no inconsiderable part in developing the popular taste for historical works in the mid-eighteenth century. How disappointed was Hume with the reception of the first volume of his *History*, which was issued at Edinburgh, he has told us in his own words:

I thought that I was the only historian that had at once neglected present power, interest, and authority, and the cry

of popular prejudices; and as the subject was suited to every capacity, expected proportional applause. But miserable was my disappointment. I was assailed by one cry of reproach, disapprobation, and even detestation; English, Scotch, and Irish, Whig and Tory, Churchman and Sectary, Freethinker and Religionist, Patriot and Courtier, united in their rage against the man who had presumed to shed a generous tear for the fate of Charles I and the Earl of Strafford; and after the first ebullitions of their fury were over, what was still more mortifying, the book seemed to sink into oblivion. Mr. Millar told me that in a twelvemonth he sold only forty-five copies of it. I scarcely, indeed, heard of one man in three kingdoms, considerable for rank or letters, that could endure the book. I must only except the primate of England, Dr. Herring, and the primate of Ireland, Dr. Stone, which seem two odd exceptions. These dignified prelates separately sent me messages 'not to be discouraged'.

Burton attributes much of the subsequent success of the *History* to the exertions of Millar. 'An arrangement was made, by which he should take the history under his protection—publish the subsequent volumes, and push the sale of the first.' The arrangement is said to have been recommended by Hume's Edinburgh publishers; and it shows how much, in that age, as probably also in this, even a sound work may depend on the publisher's exertions, for securing a hold on the public mind. The *History* was concluded in 1761, and Hume now wrote in a very different strain: 'Notwithstanding the variety of events and seasons to which my writings had been exposed, they had still been making such advances that the copy money given me by the booksellers much exceeded anything formerly known in England. I was become not only independent but opulent.'

Boswell places Dodsley at the head of the list of booksellers who, for the sum of £1575,¹ contracted with Johnson for the execution of the *Dictionary*. The others are given as 'Mr. Charles Hitch [son-in-law and successor of Arthur Bettsworth of Paternoster Row], Mr. Andrew Millar, the two Messieurs Longman, and the two Messieurs Knapton'. Unfortunately the fame which the *Dictionary* brought him did not improve Johnson's financial position. The

¹ This, by a coincidence, was exactly the amount received by the widow of Philip Stanhope for Lord Chesterfield's *Letters to his Son*.

whole of the £1575 was spent before the last page was written, the cost of amanuenses and paper, and other expenses of the kind, running away with no small portion of the sum. Boswell once said to him: 'I am sorry, Sir, you did not get more for your *Dictionary*.' His answer was, 'I am sorry too. But it was very well. The book-sellers are generous, liberal-minded men.' Upon all occasions, adds Boswell, 'he did ample justice to their character in this respect. He considered them as the patrons of literature; and indeed, although they have eventually been considerable gainers by his *Dictionary*, it is to them that we owe its having been undertaken and carried through at the risk of great expense, for they were not absolutely sure of being indemnified'. Though Millar took the principal charge of conducting the publication of the work, Dodsley seems to have been responsible for most of the preliminary arrangements.

The Doctor himself, in a letter to Dr. Burney, asks him to direct his friends to send their orders to Dodsley 'because it was by his recommendation that I was employed in the work'. It was at Dodsley's desire, too, that the 'Plan' was addressed to Lord Chesterfield—with what result we all know. The publisher was afraid that Johnson's caustic letter to the Earl, after his belated praise of the *Dictionary* in Dodsley's own journal, the *World*, would cost him that nobleman's patronage; but his fears were groundless. Dodsley told Dr. Adams that Chesterfield himself had shown him the letter. 'I should have imagined', replied Dr. Adams, 'that Lord Chesterfield would have concealed it.' 'Pooh!' said Dodsley, 'do you think a letter from Johnson could hurt Lord Chesterfield? Not at all, Sir. It lay upon his table, where anybody might see it. He read it to me; said, "This man has great powers," pointed out the severest passages, and observed how well they were expressed.'

It would be interesting to trace the growth of literary patronage up to this period from the time of Caxton, who, as mentioned on p. 38, was encouraged to continue his task of translating and printing the *Legend of Saints* by Lord Arundel's promise 'to take a reasonable quantity of them', and grant him, in addition, a yearly fee—'that is to note, a buck in summer and a doe in winter'. There are already, however, too many allied topics to admit of this; but it seems clear that the individual patron gradually gave place to the collective patronage of subscribers referred to on p. 151. A striking

instance of this was the four thousand guineas received by Prior for the folio edition of his poems issued by his admirers on his release from prison in 1717. By the middle of the eighteenth century, with the steady growth of the reading public, the patron, both collective and individual, was no longer a necessity. 'At present', wrote Oliver Goldsmith, 'the few poets of England no longer depend on the great for subsistence; they have now no other patrons than the public.' And the publisher, at the same time, had superseded the patron as the author's paymaster.

'My good friend Mr. Dodsley', as Lord Chesterfield calls him in one of his papers, continued to receive both his Lordship's patronage and his contributions to his periodical, the total number of his papers in the *World* eventually amounting to twenty-four. In the meantime Dodsley had been strengthening his connexion with Johnson by publishing his imitation of the tenth satire of Juvenal, *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, and his tragedy *Irene*, both in 1749. The poem was none too handsomely paid for, as is proved by the copy of the agreement printed by Boswell:

Nov. 25, 1748. I received of Mr. Dodsley fifteen guineas, for which I assign to him the right of copy of an imitation of the *Tenth Satire of Juvenal*, written by me; reserving to myself the right of printing one edition.

SAM. JOHNSON

Johnson made a practice in his agreements with publishers of reserving to himself this right of printing one edition, 'it being his fixed intention', says Boswell, 'to publish at some period, for his own profit, a complete collection of his works.' Dodsley was more liberal in regard to *Irene*, paying Johnson £100 for it, notwithstanding its failure on the stage at Drury Lane, and its refusal at the hands of other booksellers. Space prevents us from doing justice either to Dodsley's own highly successful tragedy, *Cleone*, or such literary work as the authorship of *The Economy of Human Life*; and we can only glance at his subsequent career in the bookselling trade—a career bound up with some of the best chapters in our literary history. How he came to publish Gray's *Elegy* is best told in Gray's own letter to Horace Walpole, to whom he had sent a copy of the poem in the summer of 1750, when Walpole incautiously circulated it among his friends:

CAMBRIDGE, February 11, 1751.

As you have brought me into a little sort of distress, you must assist me, I believe, to get out of it as well as I can. Yesterday I had the misfortune of receiving a letter from certain gentlemen (as their bookseller expresses it), who have taken the *Magazine of Magazines*¹ into their hands. They tell me that an *ingenious* poem, called *Reflections in a Country Churchyard*, has been communicated to them, which they are printing forthwith: that they are informed that the *excellent* author of it is I by name, and that they beg not only his *indulgence*, but the *honour* of his correspondence, etc. As I am not at all disposed to be either so indulgent, or so correspondent, as they desire, I have but one bad way left to escape the honour they would inflict upon me; and, therefore, am obliged to desire you would make Dodsley print it immediately (which may be done in less than a week's time) from your copy; but without my name, in what form is most convenient for him; but on his best paper and character; he must correct the press himself, and print it without any interval between the stanzas, because the sense is in some places continued beyond them; and the title must be—*Elegy, written in a Country Churchyard*. If he would add a line or two to say it came into his hands by accident, I should like it better.

Dodsley, also through the agency of Walpole, who made him his regular bookseller, had already issued Gray's first published work, *An Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College*. This appeared anonymously in the spring of 1747, but attracted no attention. Walpole must have rushed to Tully's Head with a copy of the *Elegy* as soon as he received Gray's reproachful letter, for although this did not leave Cambridge until 11th February, the poem itself was published anonymously as a quarto pamphlet on the 15th. Even so, they only beat the rival bookseller by twenty-four hours, the poem appearing in the *Magazine of Magazines* on the 16th. The *Elegy* leaped into immediate fame, running through four authorised editions in two months, apart from numerous pirated editions. 'The success of the poem, however', as Edmund Gosse says in his life of Gray, 'brought him little direct satisfaction, and no money. He gave the right of publication to Dodsley, as he did in all other instances. He held a Quixotic notion that it was beneath a gentleman to take

¹ A literary journal recently started by a bookseller of small renown, named Owen.

money for his inventions from a bookseller, a view in which Dodsley naturally coincided.' After Gray's death it was stated by another bookseller that Dodsley had made nearly a thousand pounds by his poetry.

Gray lowered his exalted ideals when he walked into Dodsley's shop in June 1757 with his two later poems, *The Bard*, and *The Progress of Poetry*, and parted with the copyright of both for forty guineas. These were the two poems with which Walpole started his private press at Strawberry Hill. 'On Monday next', writes the enthusiastic Walpole to Chute in July of this year, 'the Officina Arbuteana opens in form. The Stationers' Company, that is, Mr. Dodsley, Mr. Tonson, etc., are summoned to meet here on Sunday night. And with what do you think we open? *Cedite, Romani Impressores*—with nothing under *Græci Carmina*. I found him in town last week: he had brought his two *Odes* to be printed. I snatched them out of Dodsley's hands, and they are to be the first-fruits of my press.'

The first-fruits were a long time in the making. Gray began to lose patience with Walpole's new plaything, but copies were at length safely delivered in quarto pamphlet size, and issued on 8th August at a shilling each. In the following year Walpole printed at the same press his *Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors*, though it was Dodsley who brought out the second edition in 1759. Earlier in the same year, while making his preparations to retire from the business, in which he was to be succeeded by his brother James, Robert Dodsley entered into negotiations with Laurence Sterne for the publication of *Tristram Shandy*. Probably through an old apprentice, John Hinxman, who had taken over the bookselling business of H. Hildyard, of Stonegate, York, Sterne wrote to Robert Dodsley offering *Tristram* for fifty pounds. The substance of Robert's reply may be gathered from Sterne's second letter, which is worth giving in full. Our text is from Straus's *Life of Dodsley*:

SIR,

What you wrote to me in June last, in answer to my demand of £50 for the *Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*—that it was too much to risk on a single volume, which, if it happened not to sell, would be hard upon your brother—I think a most reasonable objection in him, against giving me the price I thought my work deserved. You need not to be told by me, how much authors are

inclined to overrate their own productions—for my own part, I hope I am an exception, for, if I could find out, by any arcanum, the precise value of mine, I declare Mr. James Dodsley should have it 20 per cent below its value. I propose, therefore, to print a lean edition, in two small volumes of the size of *Rasselas*, and on the same type and paper, at my own expense, merely to feel the pulse of the world, and that I may know what price to set on the remaining volumes from the reception of these. If my book sells, and has the run our critics expect, I propose to free myself of all future troubles of the kind, and bargain with you, if possible for the rest as they come out, which will be every six months. If my book fails of success, the loss falls where it ought to do. The same motives which inclined me first to offer you this trifle, incline me to give you the whole profits of the sale (except what Mr. Hinxman sells here, which will be a great many) and to have them sold only at your shop upon the usual terms in these cases. The book shall be printed here, and the impression sent up to you; for as I live at York, and shall correct every proof myself, it shall go perfect into the world, and be printed in so creditable a way, as to paper, type, etc., as to do no dishonour to you, who, I know, never choose to print a book meanly. Will you patronize my book upon these terms, and be as kind a friend to it as if you had bought the copyright? Be so good as to favour me with a line by the return; and believe me,

Sir, Your most obliged and most humble servant,

L. STERNE

What followed, as Straus says, is obscure, but it is probable that Dodsley advised his brother to come to terms with Sterne. What these terms were—if, indeed, any terms were made—it is impossible to say, but the work appeared on the first day of the new year, and took both London and York by storm. What that success meant to its author is shown in the fact that for the new editions of the book, and his two volumes of sermons, James Dodsley was ready to pay him £480. Robert himself retired in 1759 with a fine record. Apart from the books already named and others too numerous to mention, he published the works of Shenstone, whose close friend and biographer he became; *The Pleasures of Imagination* and other poems of Mark Akenside, who also edited the *Museum*; Swift's *Directions to Servants*, as well as a number of the Dean's minor

writings; the first three works of Edmund Burke, besides starting with him the historic *Annual Register*; the first six parts of Young's *Night Thoughts*, for the copyright of which he paid 220 guineas; and Goldsmith's *Inquiry into the State of Polite Learning*, which rescued the author from the clutches of the bookseller Griffiths.

As a fitting close to his reign at Tully's Head, he issued the first edition of *Rasselas*, written, according to the story told to Boswell by Strahan the printer, in order that Johnson, with the profits, 'might defray the expense of his mother's funeral, and pay some little debts which she had left. He told Sir Joshua Reynolds that he composed it in the evenings of one week, sent it to the press in portions as it was written, and had never since read it over. Mr. Strahan, Mr. Johnston, and Mr. Dodsley purchased it for a hundred pounds, but afterwards paid him twenty-five pounds more, when it came to a second edition'. The work was published on 19th April 1759, and went to a second edition in the following June. Dodsley has other claims to remembrance apart from his own writings and his record as a publisher. His twelve volumes of *Old Plays* and three volumes of *Poems by Several Hands*—all compiled and edited by himself—remain an enduring memorial of his services to letters.

It is time to glance at some of the provincial booksellers as they might have been found in the early sixties of the eighteenth century, about the time of Robert Dodsley's death. There were more booksellers in Birmingham than in Dr. Johnson's early days, among them William Hutton, who had established a circulating library there in 1751, but was now more intent on his paper warehouse, from which, as he tells us, he acquired an ample fortune. He is remembered as the author of a number of useful topographical works, and as a friend of Priestley who suffered heavily in the Church and King riots of 1791. His circulating library was not, it has been discovered, the first of its kind in Birmingham. This distinction apparently belongs to Thomas Warren, whose library is referred to in an advertisement which appears in a book printed by him in 1729.

To whom belongs the honour of founding our first circulating library in Britain is a vexed question. According to Benjamin Franklin there was no such thing in London in 1725. It was in that year, if we are to believe Robert Chambers's *Traditions of Edinburgh*, that Allan Ramsay started his in the Scottish capital. The

Dictionary of National Biography gives the year as 1726, 'but the first known reference to it is in 1728'. Other early circulating libraries were established at Bristol, by Thomas Sendall (1728); Bath, by James Leake (by 1735); Cambridge, by Robert Watts (about 1745); and at Norwich, where the City Library, to quote from the Report of the Select Committee on Public Libraries issued in 1849, 'appears to partake of this double character, of a town and subscription library'. This library was founded in 1608, but the earliest reference to it as a subscription library appears in the preface to its catalogue of 1732. Hull, we believe, still boasts a Subscription Library which traces its history back to 1775. Liverpool long had one of the best institutions of this kind in the Lyceum, founded in 1758 and surviving until 1944. Newcastle, always a book-loving centre, with its own Stationers' Hall on Tyne 'Brigg' in the eighteenth century, possessed two such libraries in 1755, according to Curwen—one founded by William Charnley, who lived until 1803, when he was succeeded by his son Emerson, described by Dibdin as 'the veteran Emperor of Northumbrian booksellers'.

William Charnley, before succeeding him in business, had been apprenticed to another local worthy, Martin Bryson, a friend of the bookseller-poet Allan Ramsay, who, as just mentioned, had already launched a circulating library in Edinburgh. Ramsay once sent him a letter addressed in verse:

To Martin Bryson, on Tyne Brigg,
An upright, downright, honest Whig.

York, which had been one of the earliest cities to encourage the printing-press in England, was not specially encouraging to booksellers in the eighteenth century. John Hinxman, as we have seen, had succeeded Hildyard there in 1757, and published the first edition of *Tristram Shandy* in 1760, but he soon returned to London, taking over the very considerable publishing business of Mrs. Mary Cooper, relict of Thomas Cooper, at the Globe, in Paternoster Row. York's best-known printer was Thomas Gent, who, like William Hutton, was a topographer as well, with a similar fondness for relieving his pent-up feelings in occasional verse. His autobiography, which was not discovered until long after his death, is useful for its information regarding the state of the press in his lifetime, though, like the record of Samuel Richardson's business, in which Gent was at one time

employed, it belongs more to the story of printing than to that of bookselling proper.

Dublin had no lack of printers and booksellers in the last half of the eighteenth century, but they were a notorious lot, taking full advantage of the fact that Ireland remained out of the jurisdiction of the Act of 1709. Richardson's grievance, which he printed in 1753, under the title, 'The Case of Samuel Richardson, of London, Printer, on the Invasion of his Property in the *History of Sir Charles Grandison*, before publication, by certain Booksellers of Dublin', was that of many another author of his age. He explains that he had planned to send to Dublin the volumes of *Grandison*, as in the case of *Clarissa Harlowe*, to have them printed there before they were issued in London. But the pirates surreptitiously anticipated him. 'The sheets were stolen from his warehouse, and three Irish booksellers each published cheap editions of nearly half the book before a volume appeared in England. Richardson had heard an Irish bookseller boast that he could procure, from any printing-office in London, sheets of any book while it was being printed there. "At present", he writes in conclusion, "the English writers may be said, from the attempts and practices of the Irish booksellers and printers, to live in an age of *liberty*, but not of *property*." The *Gray's Inn Journal*, in referring to his case, observed that "a greater degree of probity might be expected from booksellers on account of their occupation in life, and connections with the learned. What, then, should be said of Messrs. Exshaw, Wilson, and Saunders, booksellers in Dublin, and perpetrators of this vile act of piracy?"'

Glasgow was perhaps the most striking exception to the general rule that the best work at this period was being done in London. The Foulis Press at Glasgow—founded in 1741 by Robert Foulis, with whom was associated his brother Andrew as partner—issued some of the finest books ever printed. 'The works produced by it', says Professor Ferguson,¹ 'are quite entitled to rank with the Aldines, Elzevirs, the Bodonis, Baskervilles, which are all justly renowned for the varied excellences they possess, but no provincial, and certainly no metropolitan, press in the country has ever surpassed that of the two brothers.' They became printers to the University of Glasgow, and confined their publications mainly to editions of the classics—notably the celebrated 'immaculate' Horace—and reprints of standard works in English. But they devoted too much of their

¹ In the *Library* for March 1889.

attention and capital to their luckless scheme for a sort of Scottish Academy of Arts, and when, after their death, their affairs were finally wound up in 1781, their debts were found to amount to over £6500.

Edinburgh, at the same period, had not specially distinguished herself in bookselling annals. Her great days under Constable were still to come, her most interesting bookseller up to this time, Allan Ramsay, the poet, having retired from business in 1755, and died three years later. Alexander Donaldson, who began in Edinburgh, had opened his shop in London, where, as will presently be seen, he conducted a campaign against the Londoners which had far-reaching consequences. Other booksellers, like Thomas Miller, of Bungay, who, in 1755, as recorded by Dibdin, 'set himself up in the character of grocer and bookseller', were springing up all over England, keeping pace with the gradual increase in the reading public, and being supplied by the wholesale dealers who had now become a recognised branch of the business; but few other provincial worthies have left their names in the records of the trade.

We must return to London for our contemporary glimpse of what Lackington called 'the grand emporium of Great Britain for books'. The Strand was a great highway of letters right through the eighteenth century. Did not Pope place the race-course for the stationers in the centre of that thoroughfare? Here, too, Andrew Millar installed himself in old Jacob Tonson's house at the Shakespeare Head, opposite Catherine Street, honouring a brother Scot by changing the name to Buchanan's Head? Jacob Tonson III, who deserves to be remembered for never having learned 'to consider the author as the under-agent to the bookseller'—to quote Steevens's eulogy in the advertisement prefixed to his edition of *Shakespeare*—had left the old address for another house on the opposite side of the Strand, where he died in 1767, leaving no one of his name to succeed him. It was Jacob Tonson III who, in 1765, with a number of other booksellers, published Johnson's long-delayed edition of *Shakespeare*, and after his death was referred to by the Doctor as 'the late amiable Mr. Tonson.' And not without reason, for the publisher who had all the troublesome dealings with Johnson in connexion with the new *Shakespeare* seems also to have proved a real friend in need when, in February 1758, nearly two years after signing the agreement for the book, his editor was arrested for

a debt of £40. The facts were given by H. B. Wheatley in the *Athenaeum* of 11th September 1909, in which he printed for the first time a number of documents relating to this edition. From these it appears that Johnson, all told, must have received upwards of £1300 for his *Shakespeare*, which is nearly three times as much as it was hitherto supposed to have brought him. The work was published by subscription, Johnson issuing his proposals in 1756, and promising the work before Christmas of the following year. Yet nine years elapsed before it was ready, and Johnson admitted that he 'lost all the names and spent all the money' before it was finished.

Like the third Jacob Tonson, Henry Lintot, old Bernard Lintot's only son, died (in 1758) without leaving a successor, and also without adding much to his father's laurels as a publisher. James Dodsley continued the business left by his greater brother Robert, but appears to have closed the ordinary bookselling department, developing more on the lines of a publishing house of the present day; keeping a carriage, too, but dreadfully afraid all the time that any of his friends should hear of it. It was James Dodsley who was first approached by Chatterton, before the 'marvellous boy' made his unsuccessful bid for the patronage of Walpole. 'I take this opportunity to acquaint you that I can procure cypis of several Ancient Poems', he writes from Bristol to Tully's Head on 21st December 1768. Among them, he says, is 'an interlude, perhaps the oldest dramatic piece extant; wrote by one Rowley, a Priest in Bristol, who lived in the reign of Henry vi and Edward iv'. If these pieces were likely to be of service to the publishers, copies would be sent at his command by his 'most obedient servant De Be'. The answer was to be directed 'for D. B. to be left with Mr. Tho. Chatterton, Redcliff Hill, Bristol'.

It has been assumed that no reply was sent, from the fact that nothing of the sort has been traced, but J. H. Ingram,¹ in his study of the poet from original documents, makes it fairly obvious that some correspondence did take place. The later letter to Dodsley, in which Chatterton described the finding of his masterpiece, the tragedy of *Ælla*, and regretted that he had not the guinea which the owner demanded for a copy of the manuscript, seems clearly to prove that some intervening communications must have passed between the two. 'If it should not suit you', adds Chatterton, in his

¹ *The True Chatterton*, by John H. Ingram, 1910.

grand manner, 'I should be obliged to you if you would calculate the expenses of printing it, as I will endeavour to publish it by subscription on my own account.' Chatterton, remember, was then little more than sixteen; the tragedy itself, as now printed, contains over twelve hundred lines. What happened is not clear, though the result of the subsequent appeal to Walpole is well known. Chatterton called on Dodsley soon after his arrival in London, and it must have been there that he first realised how hard was the struggle which he had set himself to face. The rest of the unhappy story is known to every reader. It was a tragedy for Chatterton that the publisher to whom he applied was not Robert Dodsley—though some of his biographers evidently assume that it was—instead of his brother James, for Robert himself had the literary instinct, and might have sent Chatterton away as joyfully as Johnson, after that more fortunate interview in the matter of the poem *London*.

Gray's Inn at this time still had its bookseller in Thomas Osborne, an ignorant but enterprising man, who was not only pilloried by Pope in the later edition of the *Dunciad*,¹ but personally chastised by Johnson. There were at least five Osbornes or Osborns in the London book trade at that period. One was John Osborn, of the sign of the Golden Ball in Paternoster Row, who is more honourably remembered for his share in 1740 in persuading his brother stationer, Samuel Richardson, to undertake something more ambitious in literature than the indexes and dedications which had hitherto contented him. Richardson himself relates how this came about in a letter to Aaron Hill:

Two booksellers, my particular friends [John Osborn and Charles Rivington] entreated me to write for them a little volume of Letters, in a common style, on such subjects as might be of use to those country readers who were unable to indite for themselves. 'Will it be any harm', said I 'in a piece you want to be written so low, if we should instruct them how they should think and act in common cases, as well as indite?' They were the more urgent with me to begin the little volume for this hint. I set about it; and, in the progress of it, wrote two or three letters to instruct

¹ Osborne earned this distinction, according to William Roscoe, in a footnote to his edition of the *Dunciad*, for publishing advertisements pretending to sell Mr. Pope's subscription edition of Homer's *Iliad* at half the price; 'of which books he had none, but cut to the size of them (which was quarto) the common books in folio, without copper-plates, on a worse paper, and never above half the value'.

handsome girls who were obliged to go out to service, as we phrase it, how to avoid the snares that might be laid against their virtue. And hence sprung *Pamela*.

So successful was the novel that it ran through five editions within the first twelve months. It was in the following year that Johnson undertook to catalogue the Harleian Library, which Thomas Osborne had bought for £13,000—not more, according to Oldys, than the mere cost of the binding of the books. ‘It has been confidently related, with many embellishments’, says Boswell, ‘that Johnson one day knocked Osborne down in his shop, with a folio, and put his foot upon his neck. The simple truth I had from Johnson himself. “Sir, he was impertinent to me, and I beat him. But it was not in his shop: it was in my own chamber.”’ The story reminds us of the scuffle between Oliver Goldsmith and Thomas Evans,¹ the bookseller who, in 1773, published a letter in his *London Packet* reflecting on Goldsmith and Miss Horneck; and of the earlier scene between David Hume and the Fleet Street bookseller who published the review called the *History of the Works of the Learned*, which had ventured to criticise his anonymous *Treatise of Human Nature*. This was a circumstance, according to Burton’s *Life of Hume*, ‘which so highly provoked our young philosopher, that he flew in a violent rage to demand satisfaction of Jacob Robinson, the publisher, whom he kept at bay, during the paroxysm of his anger, at his sword’s point, trembling behind the counter, lest a period should be put to the life of a sober critic by a raving philosopher’. Obviously, as his biographer suggests, the author had not yet acquired the command over his passions of which he afterwards made a boast.

Johnson’s treatment of Osborne did not in the least affect his high regard for booksellers in general. He is nowhere seen to better advantage than in his dealings with ‘our poor friend Mr. Thomas Davies’, as Boswell calls him—the actor turned bookseller,² who in the back parlour of his little shop in Russell Street, Covent Garden, on that memorable Monday, 16th May 1763, first introduced Boswell to the ‘extraordinary man’ of whom he had heard so much:

¹ Not to be confused with another Thomas Evans, the scholarly bookseller of Pall Mall, who first collected Goldsmith’s writings, and himself edited Shakespeare’s *Poems*, Prior’s *Works*, and a volume of Old Ballads on the lines of Percy’s *Reliques*.

² It is said that Tom Davies was driven from the stage by Churchill’s sneer in the *Rosciad*—‘He mouths a sentence as curs mouth a bone.’

At last, on Monday the 16th of May, when I was sitting in Mr. Davies's back-parlour, after having drunk tea with him and Mrs. Davies, Johnson unexpectedly came into the shop, and Mr. Davies having perceived him through the glass-door in the room in which we were sitting, advancing towards us,—he announced his awful approach to me, somewhat in the manner of an actor in the part of Horatio, when he addresses Hamlet on the appearance of his father's ghost, 'Look, my lord, it comes.' I found that I had a very perfect idea of Johnson's figure, from the portrait of him painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds soon after he had published his Dictionary, in the attitude of sitting in his easy chair in deep meditation; which was the first picture his friend did for him, which Sir Joshua very kindly presented to me. Mr. Davies mentioned my name, and respectfully introduced me to him. I was much agitated; and recollecting his prejudice against the Scotch, of which I had heard much, I said to Davies, 'Don't tell where I come from.' 'From Scotland,' cried Davies, roguishly. 'Mr. Johnson', said I, 'I do indeed come from Scotland, but I cannot help it.' I am willing to flatter myself that I meant this as light pleasantry to soothe and conciliate him, and not as a humiliating abasement at the expense of my country. But however that might be, this speech was somewhat unlucky; for with that quickness of wit for which he was so remarkable, he seized the expression 'come from Scotland', which I used in the sense of being of that country; and, as if I had said that I had come away from it, or left it, retorted, 'That, Sir, I find, is what a very great many of your countrymen cannot help.' This stroke stunned me a good deal; and when we had sat down, I felt myself not a little embarrassed and apprehensive of what might come next.

Poor Boszzy was snubbed worse than that before the interview was over, but he counted himself well rewarded by the conversation which the great man condescended to utter in his presence. Later we find them dining together at Tom Davies's house, and it was the same publisher who, with Strahan and Cadell, waited upon Johnson on behalf of the Chapter House in 1777 to solicit the *Lives of the Poets*. Four years before this Davies had risked his friendship by publishing a pirated edition of Johnson's *Miscellaneous and Fugitive Pieces* in two volumes, but the Doctor took pity on his needy circumstances, and forgave him. 'Sir', he said to Boswell on one occasion, 'Davies has

learning enough to give credit to a clergyman'; but his learning did not prevent him in 1778 from becoming bankrupt. It was Johnson who used his influence then to help him out of his difficulties, and touching memorials of his sincere regard for his old bookselling friend are preserved by his biographer in two letters written by the Doctor when stricken with illness in the last years of his life.

Nor must we forget those dinner parties at 'my worthy booksellers and friends, Messieurs Dilly, in the Poultry, at whose hospitable and well-covered table', remarks Boswell, 'I have seen a greater number of literary men than at any other, except that of Sir Joshua Reynolds.' It was here that Bozzy so artfully negotiated the meeting between Johnson and Wilkes in 1776; and it was Charles Dilly—at one time in partnership with his brother Edward—who not only published Boswell's *Tour in the Hebrides* (1780) but the *Life of Johnson* (1791).

We are wandering, however, from our general view of the book trade as it existed in London within a few years of Robert Dodsley's death. Among the men who helped to make the neighbourhood of the Strand a favourite haunt of booklovers was Tom Payne, whose annual catalogue of literature, old and new, English and foreign, brought him customers from all parts of the kingdom. His shop was at the Mews-Gate, so named from the Royal Mews, which stood on the site of the present National Gallery. Here, in 1777, he published the first edition of the *Rowley Poems*—seven years after Chatterton's tragic death.¹ 'His little shop', says Knight, 'acquired the name of a Literary Coffee House; for there, rummaging over his shelves, or glancing at the books upon his counters, were to be found a succession of scholars always eager to purchase at the very moderate prices at which "Honest Tom Payne" marked his books.' Thomas Mathias, in his *Pursuits of Literature*, describes him as 'that *Trypho emeritus*, Mr. Thomas Payne, one of the honestest men living, to whom, as a bookseller, learning is under considerable obligations'.² Pall Mall already had other booksellers, besides the Dodsleys. Thomas Becket settled there after leaving Andrew Millar's shop to become a partner in the firm of Becket and De Hondt, who, succeeding James Dodsley as Sterne's publishers, issued the fifth and

¹ All Chatterton's literary work printed during his lifetime appeared in the periodicals. The first of his pieces to be published separately was *The Execution of Sir Charles Bawdin*, issued by W. Goldsmith, of 20 Paternoster Row, in 1772, two years after the poet's death.

² Thomas Payne the younger succeeded to his father's business in 1709, transferring it to more pretentious quarters in Pall Mall in 1806, and retiring in 1825.

sixth volumes of *Tristram Shandy* at the end of 1761, and not only completed the work, but published the same author's further volumes of *Sermons* in 1767—with a subscription list which included the names of Voltaire, Diderot, and Hume, and brought him £300 in addition to copyright money—and the *Sentimental Journey*, which appeared in February 1768, less than three weeks before poor Yorick's melancholy end.

While the Strand and farther west were thus widening the book circle of London, Fleet Street and the neighbourhood of St. Paul's still held their own, though the Churchyard itself had long since lost its old importance. Paternoster Row, standing in the shadow of St. Paul's and the new Stationers' Hall, made amends for the Churchyard's loss by steadily increasing its influence with the growth of such firms as the Rivingtons and Longmans. A stone's-throw away at the sign of the Bible and Sun dwelt 'the philanthropic publisher of St. Paul's Churchyard', as Goldsmith in *The Vicar of Wakefield* calls John Newbery, the good-natured, pimple-faced bookseller, who combined the sale of literature with that of Dr. James's celebrated Fever Powder, and other patent medicines. Newbery was the first publisher to prove that the time had come to furnish children with a special library and a light literature of their own. It was not until the eighteenth century that Englishmen began to study the needs of children in this respect. The horn-books, with their prayers and their alphabets, and the chap books which the pedlars carried about from village to village as far back as the sixteenth century, were out of date.

Newbery understood children better. *Little Goody Two Shoes*, *Giles Gingerbread*, *Tommy Trip and his Dog Jowler*, an dother of his 'Nursery Classics', as Charles Lamb calls them, all owed their origin to him, if he did not write them himself. In this connexion America honours his memory to-day with the Newbery Medal, awarded for the best children's book of the year. His inexhaustible energy—playfully caricatured by Johnson under the character of 'Jack Whirler' in the *Idler*—led him into many undertakings in practically every branch of literary and newspaper enterprise, but his fame rests chiefly on his books for children and his connexion with Oliver Goldsmith. This connexion began after Dodsley had published the *Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning* in 1759, which, as already stated, marked the end of Goldsmith's miseries at the hands of the grinding bookseller, Ralph Griffiths, who had given him hack

work on the *Monthly Review*, providing him with board and lodging in return over his shop in Paternoster Row. Escaping thence, Goldsmith found other rooms elsewhere, though still in the pay of Griffiths, who lent him, or became security for, a small sum of money in order that Goldsmith could buy a suit of clothes for his examination at Surgeons' Hall. He promised to return the money in the shape of book reviews. As luck would have it, his landlord was just then thrown into prison, and the good-natured Goldsmith must needs pawn the suit in order to secure his release, at the same time leaving the books which he had reviewed for Griffiths as security for a trifling loan advanced by a neighbour to relieve his own immediate wants. Unfortunately the parsimonious publisher happened to see the suit of clothes at the pawnbroker's, and denouncing Goldsmith as a knave and sharper, threatened to send him to prison. Here is Goldsmith's reply:

January 1759.

SIR,—

I know of no misery but a jail to which my own imprudences and your letter seem to point. I have seen it inevitable these three or four weeks, and, by heavens! request it as a favour—as a favour that may prevent something more fatal. I have been some years struggling with a wretched being—with all that contempt and indigence bring with it—with all those passions which make contempt insupportable. What, then, has a jail that is formidable? I shall at least have the society of wretches, and such is to me true society. I tell you, again and again, that I am neither able nor willing to pay you a farthing, but I will be punctual to any appointment you or the tailor shall make; thus far, at least, I do not act the sharper, since, unable to pay my own debts one way, I would generally give some security another. No, Sir; had I been a sharper—had I been possessed of less good nature and native generosity, I might surely now have been in better circumstances.

I am guilty, I own, of meannesses which poverty unavoidably brings with it: my reflections are filled with repentance for my imprudence, but not with any remorse for being a villain; that may be a character you unjustly charge me with. Your books, I can assure you, are neither pawned nor sold, but in the custody of a friend, from whom my necessities obliged me to borrow some money; whatever becomes of my person, you shall have them in a month. It is very possible both the reports you have heard, and

your own suggestions, may have brought you false information with respect to my character; it is very possible that the man whom you now regard with detestation may inwardly burn with grateful resentment. It is very possible that, upon a second perusal of the letter I sent you, you may see the workings of a mind strongly agitated with gratitude and jealousy. If such circumstances should appear, at least spare invective till my book with Mr. Dodsley shall be published, and then, perhaps, you may see the bright side of a mind, when my professions shall not appear the dictates of necessity, but of choice.

You seem to think Dr. Milner knew me not. Perhaps so; but he was a man I shall ever honour; but I have friendships only with the dead! I ask pardon for taking up so much time; nor shall I add to it by any other professions than that I am, sir, your humble servant,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

P.S.—I shall expect impatiently the result of your resolutions.

Griffiths had several months to wait for the *Inquiry into the State of Polite Learning*, the book which Dodsley had in preparation, and took the author's attack on his craft as a personal affront. Though the quarrel was patched up Griffiths never forgave him. In 1760 Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World* ran through John Newbery's *Public Ledger* as the *Chinese Letters*, and was republished by him in two volumes, anonymously, in the following year. For this the author was paid five guineas; for *The Life of Richard Nash* fourteen guineas; for *The Traveller*, the first of Goldsmith's books to bear his name, twenty guineas; and for his anonymous *History of England*, £21. 'Newbery', says Washington Irving, 'was a worthy, intelligent, kind-hearted man, and a reasonable, though cautious, friend to authors, relieving them with small loans when in pecuniary difficulties, though always taking care to be well repaid by the labour of their pains.' During the period between the publication of the *Citizen of the World* and the year of his death (1767) Newbery lived in apartments at Canonbury House, Islington, where, in the upper story, he also provided a temporary home for Goldsmith, paying quarterly for his board and lodging, and getting his author to square the account in the shape of 'copy'—*Goody Two Shoes*, perhaps, and other things. How long Goldsmith remained at Canonbury House, and how much of *The Vicar of Wakefield* was

written there, it is impossible to say. As Charles Welsh remarks in his life of Newbery,¹ 'there are probably few points of literary history of the last century more obscure and involved than the story of the writing, and the sale of the copyright, of this book'. Johnson's own picturesque story is the best known:

I received one morning a message from poor Goldsmith that he was in great distress, and as it was not in his power to come to me, begging that I would come to him as soon as possible. I sent him a guinea, and promised to come to him directly. I accordingly went as soon as I was drest, and found that his landlady had arrested him for his rent, at which he was in a violent passion. I perceived that he had already changed my guinea, and had got a bottle of Madeira and a glass before him. I put the cork into the bottle, desired he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated. He then told me that he had a novel ready for the press, which he produced to me. I looked into it, and saw its merit; told the landlady I should soon return, and having gone to a bookseller, sold it for sixty pounds. I brought Goldsmith the money, and he discharged his rent, not without rating his landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill.

Whoever the landlady was, and whether John Newbery was at the back of his arrest or not, the fact remains that it was first published in 1766 in the name of 'Honest John's' nephew, Francis Newbery, who, apparently with his uncle's assistance, had been set up in business at the Crown, in Paternoster Row. It seems probable that the elder Newbery had a common interest in the *Vicar*; but if that were so he did not live to see any returns for his investment. His biographer shows that it was not until after the fourth edition had been sold—eight years after the first—that the publisher received any profit from the work. Family disputes broke up the house of Newbery after the founder's death. His nephew opened a new shop at No. 20 Ludgate Street, while his son, also named Francis, summoned from Oxford on his father's death, carried on the business at the old address in partnership with his step-brother, Thomas Carnan.

Francis Newbery, the son of the founder, appears to have con-

¹ *A Bookseller of the Last Century*, 1885.

tinued the intimate relations which existed between Goldsmith and his father. 'Being pressed by pecuniary difficulties in 1771-1772', writes James Prior in his life of the author, 'Goldsmith had at various periods obtained the advance of two or three hundred pounds from Newbery under the engagement of writing a novel, which, after the success of the *Vicar of Wakefield*, promised to be one of the most popular speculations. Considerable delay took place in the execution of this undertaking, and when at length submitted to the approval of the bookseller, it proved to be in great measure the plot of the comedy of *The Good Natur'd Man*, turned into a tale. Objections being taken to this, the manuscript was returned. Goldsmith declared himself unable or unwilling to write another, but in liquidation of the debt now pressingly demanded, said he should require time to look round for means of raising the money, unless Mr. Newbery chose to take the chance of a play coming forward at Covent Garden. "And yet, to tell you the truth, Frank", added the candid poet in making the proposal, "there are great doubts of its success." Newbery accepted the offer, doubtful of being otherwise repaid, and the popularity of *She Stoops to Conquer* gained, according to the recollection of the narrator, above £300 more than the sum advanced to the author.'

Newbery the younger and Thomas Carnan continued their joint imprint until about the year 1782, when Newbery appears to have retired in order to devote himself to the still flourishing medicinal branch of the business. Carnan remained at the old address until 1788, but all the old copyrights passed at some time or other to the rival house started by the founder's nephew, now, however, carried on by his widow, from whom it subsequently passed to John Harris and his successors.

Carnan deserves to be remembered for breaking down the Stationers' ancient monopoly in the matter of almanacks. He dared to publish almanacks of his own, whereupon the Stationers' Company not only anathematised them as counterfeit, but sent him to prison on a summary process as regularly as he issued them. 'A friend of his family', wrote Charles Knight in 1865, 'told me, some forty years ago, that this incorrigible old bookseller always at this season kept a clean shirt in his pocket, that he might make a decent appearance before the magistrate and keeper of Newgate. But Carnan persevered till the judges of the Court of Common Pleas decided against the validity of the patent, and an injunction which

had been obtained in the Exchequer was immediately dissolved. The Stationers' Company then induced Lord North to bring a Bill into Parliament to revest in them the monopoly which had been declared illegal. In 1779, Erskine, in a speech which remains as one of the great triumphs of his oratory, procured the rejection of this Bill by a large majority.¹

Another venerable custom shattered about this time was that based on the supposed perpetuity of copyright, the London booksellers believing that they held this right under the Common Law for property not falling within the terms of the Copyright Act of 1709. It was Alexander Donaldson, from Edinburgh, who disillusioned them. A keen pioneer of popular reprints, Donaldson, as already mentioned, had extended his business to London, starting a bookshop in the Strand, and issuing cheap editions of the most popular English books, to the no small discomfiture of his London brethren, who looked askance at his underselling prices. He brought matters to a head by reprinting Thomson's *Seasons*, the statutory copyright of which, under the Act of 1709, had expired in 1758; but which, under what Johnson described as 'an equitable title from usage', was still supposed to possess perpetual copyright, Andrew Millar having bought it in that belief from Thomson, and Millar's executors having sold it to Becket, Sterne's publisher, after the original publisher's death in 1768.

The whole trade, indeed, had lived under that superstition since the passing of the Act of Anne. Publishers had bought and sold such property for large sums, honestly believing that they were dealing in copyrights which held good for ever. When, therefore, Donaldson violated this custom by reprinting the *Seasons*, action was taken against him, and, what is more, Lord Chancellor Bathurst upholding the supposed Common Law right, gained a perpetual injunction against him. The decision was based on an earlier verdict in the similar case of *Millar v. Taylor*, where the matter had been allowed to rest; but Donaldson carried the case to the House of Lords, where, in February 1774, he won the day, the House deciding by twenty-one votes to eleven, that no such Common Law right existed.¹ This was very largely due to a speech from the great Whig lawyer, Lord Camden, who combined Pope's opinion of the

¹ Alexander Donaldson left a considerable fortune at his death. His son, James Donaldson, who became proprietor and editor of the *Edinburgh Advertiser*, was even more successful, founding Donaldson's Hospital, Edinburgh, and leaving £220,000 for the maintenance of 300 poor children.

generality of booksellers with his own aristocratic scorn of the man who made his living by his pen. 'Knowledge', declared Lord Camden, 'has no value or use for the solitary owner: to be enjoyed it must be communicated. *Scire tuum nihil est, nisi te scire hoc sciat alter*. Glory is the reward of science, and those who deserve it scorn all meaner views: I speak not of the scribblers for bread, who tease the press with their wretched productions; fourteen years is too long a privilege for their perishable trash. It was not for gain that Bacon, Newton, Milton, and Locke instructed and delighted the world; it would be unworthy such men to traffic with a dirty bookseller. When the bookseller offered Milton five pounds for his *Paradise Lost*, he did not reject it and commit it to the flames, nor did he accept the miserable pittance as the reward of his labour; he knew that the real price of his work was immortality, and that posterity would pay it.'

After the decision in the House of Lords an unsuccessful attempt was made to render copyright perpetual, the Bill passing the House of Commons in 1774, but being rejected by the Lords, and so the matter was left until 1801 and 1814, when the Act of 1709 was altered, the copyright term being extended to cover the length of the author's life, or twenty-eight years from the date of publication, whichever was the longer.¹ Notwithstanding the unsuccessful attempt to secure a Bill for perpetual copyright, the London booksellers, as Boswell tells us, continued—for a time at all events—to preserve their ancient usage by mutual compact. They had an exclusive club of their own, dining once a month at the Shakespeare Tavern, where many a big undertaking was first suggested, chief among them being Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, the story of which is told in the letter written by Edward Dilly, the elder of the two brothers who were Boswell's 'worthy booksellers and good friends', to Bozzy himself, dated 26th September 1777:

DEAR SIR,

You will find by this letter, that I am still in the same calm retreat, from the noise and bustle of London as when I wrote to

¹ This remained in force until the Act of 1842, which made copyright endure for the author's life, *plus* seven years; or should the two terms not amount to forty-two years, then for forty-two years from the date of first publication. Under the Copyright Act of 1911 the period was extended to cover the life of the author and fifty years after his death; with the proviso that after he had been dead for twenty-five years anyone could reproduce an author's work on certain terms specified in the Act.

you last. I am happy to find you had such an agreeable meeting with your old friend Dr. Johnson. . . . When he opens freely, every one is attentive to what he says, and cannot fail of improvement as well as pleasure. The edition of the Poets, now printing, will do honour to the English press; and a concise account of the life of each author, by Dr. Johnson, will be a very valuable addition, and stamp the reputation of this edition superior to anything that is gone before. The first cause that gave rise to this undertaking, I believe, was owing to the little trifling edition of the Poets, printing by the Martins at Edinburgh, and to be sold by Bell in London. Upon examining the volumes which were printed, the type was found so extremely small that many persons could not read them; not only this inconvenience attended it, but the inaccuracy of the press was very conspicuous. These reasons, as well as the idea of an invasion of what we call our Literary Property, induced the London booksellers to print an elegant and accurate edition of all the English poets of reputation, from Chaucer to the present time.

Accordingly a select number of the most respectable booksellers met on the occasion; and, on consulting together, agreed that all the proprietors of copyright in the various poets should be summoned together; and when their opinions were given, to proceed immediately on the business. Accordingly a meeting was held, consisting of about forty of the most respectable booksellers of London, when it was agreed that an elegant and uniform edition of *The English Poets* should be immediately printed, with a concise account of the life of each author, by Dr. Samuel Johnson: and that three persons should be deputed to wait upon Dr. Johnson, to solicit him to undertake the Lives, viz. T. Davies, Strahan, and Cadell. The Doctor very politely undertook it, and seemed exceedingly pleased with the proposal. As to the terms, it was left entirely with the Doctor to name his own; he mentioned two hundred guineas; it was immediately agreed to; and a farther compliment, I believe, will be made him. A committee was likewise appointed to engage the best engravers, viz. Bartolozzi, Sherwin, Hall, etc. Likewise another committee for giving directions about the paper, printing, etc., so that the whole will be conducted with spirit, and in the best manner, with respect to authorship, editorship, engravings, etc., etc. My brother will give you a list of the poets we mean to give, many of which

are within the time of the Act of Queen Anne, which Martin and Bell cannot give, as they have no property in them; the proprietors are almost all the booksellers in London of consequence. I am, dear Sir, ever yours,

EDWARD DILLY

Johnson's moderation in demanding so small a sum is extraordinary, says Malone in remarking on this letter. 'Had he asked one thousand, or even fifteen hundred guineas, the booksellers, who knew the value of his name, would doubtless have readily given it. They have probably got five thousand guineas by this work in the course of twenty-five years.' But Johnson, according to Boswell, paid little attention to profit from his literary labours. John Bell, who thus indirectly helped to father the *Lives of the Poets*, was not only, like Alexander Donaldson, a pioneer of cheapness. Full of ideas, he was the first man to set the fashion of discarding the long f (s), which he did in publishing his *British Theatre*—intended to supersede the old octavo editions of single plays and the large collected editions of the dramatists. He was the first publisher, also, of English pocket classics. Charles Knight calls him 'the very Puck of Booksellers'. His editions of the *British Poets* ran to over a hundred volumes, issued from his busy shop in the Strand from 1777 to 1789. Notwithstanding the prejudiced criticism of the reactionaries quoted in Edward Dilly's letter, the books were beautifully printed and deserved their success. It was not until the present century that justice was done to John Bell's many enterprises, not only in printing technique and publishing method, but also in the English newspaper press—to say nothing of his activities as correspondent with the British Army in Flanders in 1794.¹ The present house of Bell—the story of which is told on a later page—is of younger growth, and has no connexion with John Bell, who died in 1831.

Only two of the twenty-six houses which continued to publish the first edition of Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* (1779–1781) have been continued in direct succession down to the present day—Thomas Longman and John Murray. The first Thomas Longman had died in 1755, only two months after the publication of Johnson's *Dictionary*, in which he held a considerable number of shares. His

¹ See *John Bell, 1745–1831: Bookseller, Printer, Publisher, Typefounder, Journalist, etc., by Stanley Morison. 1930.*

nephew and successor, Thomas Longman II, to whom reference is now made, controlled the affairs of the firm until towards the end of the eighteenth century, developing the business both at home and abroad on sound if uneventful lines. The first John Murray, at the same date, had only been in business ten years, but long enough to find mention in Boswell's comprehensive gossip:

Somebody mentioned the Reverend Mr. Mason's prosecution of Mr. Murray, the bookseller, for having inserted in a collection of Gray's *Poems* only fifty lines, of which Mr. Mason had still the exclusive property under the statute of Queen Anne; and that Mr. Mason had persevered, notwithstanding his being requested to name his own terms of compensation. Johnson signified his displeasure at Mr. Mason's conduct very strongly; but added, by way of shewing that he was not surprised at it, 'Mason's a Whig.' MRS. KNOWLES (not hearing distinctly): 'What, a prig, Sir?' JOHNSON: 'Worse, Madam; a Whig! But he is both.'

The feud between Whiggery and the House of Murray, as Knight suggests, might thus have had a remote origin.

THE END OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

AFTER Johnson's death in 1784 the chief honours of 'The Trade'¹ belonged to Thomas Cadell, who, it will not be forgotten, was associated with him in the *Lives of the Poets*, supporting his partners, William Strahan, and Tom Davies, during the momentous interview on behalf of the 'Chapter'. Many years earlier Cadell had started life as an apprentice to Andrew Millar, who took him into partnership in 1765; and two years later, on Millar's retirement—to die in the following year—the old apprentice became his successor. Cadell still occupied the house in the Strand at No. 141, 'over against Catherine Street'—where the first Jacob Tonson had hung out his sign of the Shakespeare Head, to be hauled down when the devoted Scot, Andrew Millar, replaced it with that of Buchanan's Head. Many memories clustered round this long-forgotten bookshop, haunted by a whole century of illustrious authors—Swift, Addison, Steele and Pope, Johnson and his faithful Boswell, Fielding and Thomson, and the authors who made history popular in their day, Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon—until the site was obliterated by one of the wings of Somerset House.

Cadell, like his predecessor Millar, had been associated with William Strahan in his literary enterprises up to this period of his career, but Strahan, now in his seventieth year, did not long survive his friend, Dr. Johnson, for he died in 1785. Cadell and Strahan together had been worthy leaders of their craft who preceded them. 'There will be no books of importance now printed in London', wrote Hume to his countryman Strahan, on receiving a presentation copy of the first volume of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* in 1776, 'but through your hands and Mr. Cadell's.' And they did, indeed, succeed in gathering round them a remarkable group of men—not only Hume, Robertson, Gibbon, and the other authors

¹ 'As physicians are called "The Faculty", and Counsellors at Law "The Profession", wrote Boswell, 'the booksellers of London are called "The Trade"'. Johnson disapproved of these denominations.'

already mentioned in this connexion, but also Thomas Somerville, Adam Smith, Blackstone, Mackenzie—*The Man of Feeling*—and many others.

Boswell tells the story of the plagiarism of *The Man of Feeling* by a young Irish clergyman, named Eccles, who was afterwards drowned near Bath. This impudent impostor had taken the trouble to transcribe the whole book, with blottings, interlineations, and corrections, afterwards displaying it as his own original work. The belief in Eccles as the author became so general that the original publishers, Strahan and Cadell, were compelled to issue an advertisement contradicting the claim, and declaring that they had purchased the copyright from Henry Mackenzie. Five years after the first appearance of *The Man of Feeling* came the splendid success of the first volume of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*. The historian himself—M.P. for Liskeard at the time—has told us something of the fluctuating fortunes of this book:

The volume of my History, which had been somewhat delayed by the novelty and tumult of a first session, was now ready for the press. After the perilous adventure had been declined by my friend Mr. Elmsley, I agreed upon easy terms with Mr. Thomas Cadell, a respectable bookseller, and Mr. William Strahan, an eminent printer; and they undertook the care and risk of the publication, which derived more credit from the name of the shop than from that of the author. The last revisal of the proofs was submitted to my vigilance; and many blemishes of style, which had been invisible in the manuscript, were discovered and corrected in the printed sheet. So moderate were our hopes, that the original impression had been stinted to five hundred, till the number was doubled by the prophetic taste of Mr. Strahan. . . . I am at a loss how to describe the success of the work, without betraying the vanity of the writer. The first impression was exhausted in a few days; a second and third edition were scarcely adequate to the demand; and the bookseller's property was twice invaded by the pirates of Dublin.

An illuminating document survives to show us the kind of accounts which passed between author and publisher in this

case.¹ A thousand copies had been printed of the first edition of the first volume, fifteen hundred of the second edition, and another thousand of the third edition. It is to this last that the account refers, from which it will be seen that Gibbon took two-thirds of the profits, and that Strahan and Cadell shared the remaining third between them. No wonder Gibbon was satisfied with his publishers! His second and third volumes did not appear until 1781, and the fourth and completing volume until 1788—three years after Strahan's death—when the day of publication was delayed in order, writes the historian, 'that it might coincide with the fifty-first anniversary of my own birthday; the double festival was celebrated by a cheerful literary dinner at Mr. Cadell's house; and I seemed to blush while they read an elegant compliment from Mr. Hayley'. Peter Elmsley, who must have been very sorry for himself as he watched the golden harvest being reaped from the very work which he had declined, lived to see the more enterprising publisher made Alderman and afterwards Sheriff of London, and then—like Tonson and Lintot in the earlier days—followed him to the grave in the same year (1802).²

Many gaps were created in the book markets of London in this last quarter of the eighteenth century. John Rivington, continuing the orthodox traditions of his father, kept his house at the head of

¹ 'State of the Account of Mr. Gibbon's *Roman Empire*. Third edition. 1st Vol. No. 1000. April 30th, 1777.

	£	s.	d.
Printing 90 sheets at 1l. 6s. with notes at the bottom of the page	117	0	0
180 reams of paper at 19s.	171	0	0
Paid the Corrector, extra care	5	5	0
Advertisements and incidental expenses	16	15	0
	<hr/> £310 0 0 <hr/>		
	£	s.	d.
1000 books at 16s.	800	0	0
Deduct as above	310	0	0
Profit on this edition when sold	<hr/> £490 0 0 <hr/>		
Mr. Gibbon's two-thirds is	326	13	4
Messrs. Strahan and Cadell's	163	6	8
	<hr/> £490 0 0 <hr/>		

Errors excepted.³

² Peter Elmsley's bookshop in the Strand was a favourite haunt of literary men and booklovers in the second half of the eighteenth century. It was here that Gibbon first met Porson.

the religious trade until his death in 1792. True to his principles in private as well as in his business life, he always put up his shutters at the sign of the Bible and Crown in Paternoster Row on the 30th of January—the anniversary of the execution of Charles I. His more speculative brother, James Rivington, had published Smollett's *History of England* with James Fletcher in St. Paul's Churchyard: a work which yielded £10,000, the largest profit ever made up to that time by any one book. This stroke of luck, unhappily, did James more harm than good. Racing and gambling led to failure; and then to various ups and downs at home and in America before he started his *Rivington's New York Gazette* in 1777. John was succeeded by his two elder sons, Francis and Charles, who, in the following year, established the *British Critic* in partnership with William Beloe and Archdeacon Nares.¹ John Rivington had added greatly to the prestige of the firm by his appointment in 1760 as publisher to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, an appointment which remained in the house for more than seventy years. Burke also made him his publisher after Robert Dodsley's death.²

Edward Dilly, who gave Boswell the inside history of the *Lives of the Poets*, and was so fond of a gossip that he is said to have talked himself to death, dealt in books which probably caused the Rivingtons to raise their hands in pious horror. Both Edward and his younger brother Charles, whom he took into partnership, were dissenters, and not only published in England many theological works of that school, but exported great quantities to America. Edward Dilly died in 1779, but his brother—Boswell's publisher—lived until 1807, four years after becoming Master of the Stationers' Company.

When Dr. Johnson died—to return to the year 1784—the house of Longmans had not yet achieved the high distinction which it first earned with the reign of Thomas Longman III. John Murray II was only six years old—Byron himself was still unborn; and Archibald Constable was but four years the senior of the great John Murray. But away on the hills of Ayrshire was a 'heaven-

¹ Nares acted as editor, and with Beloe's help continued the *British Critic* as a monthly periodical down to 1813, when a new series was begun under the editorship of Dean Lyall. A third series was started in 1825, but ceased at the end of the third volume. Several attempts were made to revive it, but without any lasting success.

² Rivingtons published the first complete edition of Burke's works in 1853, in eight volumes, edited by Francis Rivington, then head of the house.

taught ploughman', racked with troubles which, though largely of his own making, drove him at times to the very border-land of insanity, yet scribbling, between-while, some of the finest poems that were ever written. Robert Burns was in the midst of his 'Highland Mary' romance and the distractions which followed the natural consequences of his relations with Jean Armour, when he arranged with John Wilson, a printer of Kilmarnock, to publish the first edition of his poems. He had resolved to leave the country for a post as bookkeeper on a West Indian estate, and he only hoped to provide his passage-money out of the profits from the poems. The little volume, issued at the subscription price of three shillings, appeared in July 1786. Few perfect copies are known to exist. One, preserved in the Burns Cottage Museum at Ayr, cost the trustees £1000. Another copy was sold at Sotheby's in 1925 for £1750. The price rose to £2450 for the late James Mann's copy on 4th July 1929. This was considerably higher than any other price paid for the book, before or since.

I threw off six hundred copies [wrote Burns in this connexion], for which I got subscriptions for about three hundred and fifty. My vanity was highly gratified by the reception I met with from the public; and besides, I pocketed, all expenses deducted, nearly twenty pounds. This came very seasonably, as I was thinking of indenting myself, for want of money to procure my passage. As soon as I was master of nine guineas, the price of wafting me to the torrid zone, I took a steerage passage in the first ship that was to sail from the Clyde; for

Hungry ruin had me in the wind.

I had been for some days skulking from covert to covert, under the terrors of a jail; as some ill-advised people had uncoupled the merciless pack of the law at my heels.¹ I had taken the last farewell of my friends; my chest was on the way to Greenock; I had composed the last song I should ever measure in Caledonia, *The gloomy night is gathering fast*, when a letter from Dr. Blacklock to a friend of mine overthrew my schemes by opening up new prospects to my poetic ambition.

¹ The truth being that Jean Armour's father, though he refused to accept Burns as a son-in-law, notwithstanding his daughter's unfortunate condition, was pursuing him at law in order to extort money from him.

This led to the visit to Edinburgh, where Burns found himself the literary lion of the day, and also to the second edition of his poems. Wilson, the Kilmarnock printer, had declined to undertake this unless the poet would advance the price of the paper required for it—which Burns was unable to do. In Edinburgh, however, he found a publisher in William Creech, then the chief bookseller in the Scottish capital, through whom the second and enlarged edition was issued by subscription in April of the following year. Burns had good reason to be proud of his subscription list, including as it did many of the most distinguished names of the Scottish aristocracy, some of whom subscribed handsomely, Lord Eglinton, for example, taking as many as forty-two copies. Unfortunately, Burns had to wait a long time for his money, and he abuses Creech heartily in his letters to his friends at that time. But there was a pleasant surprise for him when at length the accounts of his dilatory bookseller were made up, for instead of the £200 or so which he told one of his patrons he hoped to gain by this edition, he found himself, on the day of reckoning, in possession of £500, if not of £600.

We all know the rest of his story—his home-making at last with Jean Armour as his wife, his life as exciseman at £70 a year, his generous contributions to Johnson's *Museum of Scottish Song*, as well as to Thomson's greater collection, and the everlasting struggle with poverty which fretted his proud spirit to the end.

At the close of the eighteenth century another national poet was spending the last few years of his life in Norfolk. William Cowper was not only more fortunate than Burns both in popular and official recognition during his own time, but voted himself—for a while at all events—more than satisfied with his publisher. This worthy, Joseph Johnson, had held an honourable place in the ranks of the leading London publishers since the days of Dr. Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, in which he had a share. In close sympathy with the advanced thought of his day, he issued the scientific writings of Priestley, was bookseller and publisher for Horne Tooke and John Newton, and counted Erasmus Darwin among his other notable authors. It was John Newton who introduced Cowper, with their joint *Olney Hymns* in 1779, to 'my old friend Joseph Johnson, in St. Paul's Churchyard', as he calls him in a letter to John Thornton, of Clapham, who had promised to bear the risks of publication. 'He printed my *Narrative* and volume of *Sermons*', he adds; 'and though he is not a *professor*, I believe him a man of honour and

integrity.' Newton proved uncommonly useful to this 'old friend', for when Cowper handed over to him the entire matter of the publication of his own first volume of poems he not only took them straightway to the bookseller, but, on his promising to take the whole charge upon himself, made him a present of the copyright. Cowper was perfectly satisfied. He had already told Newton that he only wrote for amusement, as something 'towards diverting that train of melancholy thoughts'; and when Johnson suggested to him that the preface which Newton had contributed to the book—well-meant, no doubt, but alluding unnecessarily to the poet's painful malady and making too much of the religious value of the volume—should be omitted he at once agreed.

Cowper pays another tribute to his publisher, whose interference with his text would have roused a more spirited poet to furious indignation. 'I have reason to be very much satisfied with my publisher', he writes. 'He marked such lines as did not please him, and, as often as I could, I paid all possible respect to his animadversions. You will accordingly find, at least if you recollect how they stood in the MS., that several passages are the better for having undergone his critical notice. Indeed, I do not know where I could have found a bookseller who could have pointed out to me my defects with more discernment; and as I find it is a fashion for modern bards to publish the names of the literati who have favoured their works with a revisal, would myself most willingly have acknowledged my obligations to Johnson, and so I told him.'

He continued in Cowper's good books at least until 1786, and the poet was evidently satisfied with the payments which he received for most of his later books. 'Johnson behaves very handsomely in the affairs of my two volumes', he writes in that year to Lady Hesketh. 'He acts with a liberality not often found in persons of his occupation, and to mention it when occasion calls me to it is a justice due to him.' Poet and publisher unhappily did not continue these cordial relations to the end. There was a decided rift in their dealings over the translation of Homer, which Cowper, like Pope, issued by subscription. His printed Proposals brought in a list of subscriptions which he believed need not fear any comparison with Pope's—'considering', he adds, 'that we live in days of terrible taxation, and when verse, not being necessary to life, is accounted dear, be it what it may, even at the lowest price'. Cowper, by this

time, had become as keen a bargainer as the most mercenary of authors. 'I devoutly second your droll wish that the booksellers may contend with me', he writes to Joseph Hall in 1790. 'The more the better. Seven times seven, if they please; and let them fight with the fury of Achilles:

Till every rubric-post be crimson'd o'er
With blood of booksellers, in battle slain
For me, and not a periwig untorn.'

The two volumes were to be issued at the price of three guineas—which worked out, in the poet's own reckoning, at less than the seventh part of a farthing per line—and by 7th July 1791 he complains of his head 'being filled with the cares of publication, and the bargain that I am making with my bookseller'. How the affair was settled he tells in his own way in a letter written four days later to Lady Hesketh:

MY DEAREST COZ,—I am not much better pleased with that dealer in authors than yourself. His first proposal, which was to pay me with my own money, or in other words to get my copy for nothing, not only dissatisfied but hurt me, implying, as I thought, the meanest opinion possible of my labours. For that for which an intelligent man will give nothing, can be worth nothing. The consequence was that my spirits sank considerably below par, and have but just begun to recover themselves. His second offer, which is to pay all expenses, and to give me a thousand pounds next midsummer, leaving the copyright still in my hands, is more liberal. With this offer I have closed. . . .

As to Sephus' scheme of signing the seven hundred copies in order to prevent a clandestine multiplication of them, at the same time that I feel the wisdom of it, I feel also an unsurmountable dislike of it. It would be calling Johnson a knave, and telling the public that I think him one. Now, though I do not perhaps think so highly of his liberality as some people do, and as I was once myself disposed to think, yet I have no reason at present to charge him with dishonesty. I must even take my chance, as other poets do, and if I am wronged, must comfort myself with what somebody has said,—that authors are the natural prey of booksellers.

In justice to Joseph Johnson it is only fair to add that he left a reputation which is more in accordance with Newton's judgment of him as 'a man of honour and integrity' than the impression made by Cowper's last letter. He held the political and religious views of his more revolutionary authors, and suffered nine months' imprisonment for publishing prohibited works of Gilbert Wakefield. But he could afford to temper his suffering by living in style in the Marshal's House, where he was free to entertain his literary and political friends as handsomely as he pleased. He was also a generous subscriber to Fuseli's *Milton Gallery*, and from 1788 to 1799 published the *Analytical Review*.

More interesting than either of these enterprises was his association with William Blake, who found in him, in 1791, a sympathetic publisher for his unfinished work on *The French Revolution*. This was no more successful than his first volume of verse, the *Poetical Sketches*, printed in 1783 at the expense mainly of the sculptor Flaxman and his friend the Rev. Henry Mathew. The *Poetical Sketches* were followed in 1789 by the *Songs of Innocence*, Blake in this case not only writing and illustrating the book himself, but printing it by a process of his own, and finally superintending its binding at the hands of his devoted wife. Five years later, and by similar means, came the companion book, *Songs of Experience*, afterwards bound up with the other in a volume for which Blake received, at various periods, prices ranging from thirty shillings to five guineas—occasionally even more. Blake issued most of his works in this way, the exceptions including his illustrations for two little books by Mary Wollstonecraft, published, like his *French Revolution*, by Joseph Johnson, who, with Fuseli and others, made 'great objections', he writes in connexion with his memorable association with Hayley in the *Life of Cowper*, 'to my doing anything but the mere drudgery of business, and intimating that, if I do not confine myself to this, I shall not live.' Blake did a trifle better in his dealings with Edwards of Bond Street, who only paid him, however, at the rate of a guinea a plate for his designs for a new edition of Young's *Night Thoughts*.

But the one publisher of all others remembered in connexion with Blake is the notorious Robert H. Cromek, who was more a printseller and engraver than a dealer in books. Cromek not only paid him the lowest market value for his matchless illustrations of Blair's *Grave*—twenty guineas for the series—but broke the agreement by which the artist was also given the engraving to do. Worse

still, he stole from Blake the idea of his *Chaucer's Pilgrims* for the oil-painting which he afterwards commissioned from Stothard. The dispute which ensued, and the rival exhibitions, are matters beyond our province, but it is sad to think of the disappointments which dogged the footsteps of this unappreciated genius through the remaining years of his life. He wrote more at this period, he declared, than Shakespeare and Milton together; but no publisher would print what he wrote; he gave up trying to publish them himself; and nearly all these manuscripts were either lost or destroyed.

It was the day of the 'horrid' Gothic novelists satirised by Jane Austen in *Northanger Abbey*. The bookshops and libraries were full of tales of terror like Mrs. Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho*—though Walpole, with his *Castle of Otranto* in 1765, had been first in the field—'Monk' Lewis's *Ambrosio*, and their host of followers. The popular taste was largely fostered by William Lane at 33 Leadenhall Street, where, following the prevailing fashion for classical titles, he called his publishing house the Minerva Press. Lane spread the vogue with the help of circulating libraries which he established in the more fashionable of the country towns, as well as by means of the great central library which he ran in London. Leadenhall Street in those days would be thronged with fashionable women, with their carriages and books, on their way to and from the Minerva Press.

If London had not been first in the field with the circulating library that institution was firmly established there by the middle of the eighteenth century. Simon Fancourt's catalogue of his lending library, which he issued in 1748, ran to two stout volumes. By 1777, when Sheridan's *Rivals* was produced, the new fashion had made such strides that the dramatist was driven to make Sir Anthony Absolute declare: 'A circulating library in a town is an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge. It blossoms throughout the year. And depend upon it that they who are so fond of handling the leaves will long for the fruit at last.'

An ambitious, unscrupulous publisher, Lane thought nothing of reprinting forgotten books with fresh titles and issuing them as new. By these and other methods he earned the contempt of his more scrupulous rivals. Yet he did good service as an officer of the H.A.C. and became a partner in the Stationers' Company.¹ Like

¹ Much light has been thrown on Lane's career and the book trade of his time in Dorothy Blakey's study of 'The Minerva Press', issued by the Bibliographical Society in 1939.

James Lackington, he made a fortune which enabled him to drive about town in a magnificent carriage accompanied by cockaded footmen complete with gold-headed canes, before he died in 1814.

The end of the eighteenth century found the book trade still struggling with the problems which, though changed with time, were fundamentally the same as in the days of the old monopolists. The French Revolution, with its universal reassessment of values, had given an added impetus to the movement towards individual liberty which had been part of the history of the Stationers' Company almost from its birth. There was now open war between the more conservative booksellers on the one hand and those rebellious booksellers who declined to bow their heads to old-established usages. The rebels formed themselves about the end of the eighteenth century into an independent band of 'Associated Booksellers', among them Thomas Hood—the bookseller of the Poultry, where his son, Thomas Hood, the poet, was born—and James Lackington. Lackington, though an arrant egotist, was a man of many ideas, and great independence of character. He sold for cash down only; no one—not 'even the nobility'—was allowed any credit; and in spite of all the ridicule which the trade as a whole heaped upon this experiment, and the low prices which Lackington charged for his books, he retired with a large fortune from the 'Temple of the Muses', as he called his once famous book-shop at the corner of Finsbury Square. This building was so vast that a mail-coach and four were driven round the counters at its opening, which took place not long after Lackington, in 1793, sold a fourth share of the business to Robert Allen, who had been brought up as a boy in his shop.

Lackington was the first bookseller, we believe, who speculated systematically in the 'Remainder' trade, the last refuge of the literary failures, and of books that have had their little day of success and died. He tells, in his curious *Memoirs* and *Confessions*, how hard a fight it was to live down the trade prejudices of his time. 'I was very much surprised', he writes, 'to learn that it was common for such as purchased remainders to destroy or burn one-half or three-fourths of such books, and to charge the full price, or nearly that, for such as they kept in hand.' Lackington changed all this, but it was some time before he forced the trade to yield. And he made many enemies in this way, 'some of whom . . . by a variety of pitiful insinuations and dark innuendoes strained every nerve to injure the reputation I had already acquired with the public;

determined to effect my ruin, which indeed they daily prognosticated, with a demon-like spirit, must inevitably speedily follow.' Perhaps it was the recollection of this opposition which made him so boastful in his hour of triumph. He built a chariot, on the doors of which he had a motto inscribed: 'Small profits do great things', and in this carriage, attended by his servants, he drove round the kingdom in state.

Lackington has left us some valuable sketches of the book trade as he found it in different parts of the country. Travelling from London to Edinburgh by way of York and Newcastle-on-Tyne, and returning through Glasgow, Carlisle, Leeds, and Manchester, he was both surprised and disappointed, 'at meeting with very few of the works of the most esteemed authors; and those few consisted in general of ordinary editions; besides an assemblage of common trifling books, bound in sheep; and that, too, in a very bad manner. It is true, at York and Leeds, there were a few (and but very few) good books; but in all the other towns between London and Edinburgh nothing but trash was to be found; in the latter city, indeed, a few capital articles are kept, but in no other part of Scotland.'

A year or two later he tried the West of England, and found matters just as bad; London was the 'grand emporium of Great Britain for books, engrossing nearly the whole of what is valuable in that very extensive, beneficial, and lucrative branch of trade'. Lackington had been a journeyman shoemaker at Bristol and other places in the West of England, and he amused himself when he made his tour as a successful bookseller by calling on his old masters and addressing each with 'Pray, Sir, have you got any occasion?' which, he explains in his autobiography, was the term then used by journeymen shoemakers when seeking employment. 'Most of these honest men had quite forgotten my person, as many of them had not seen me since I worked for them; so that it is not easy for you to conceive with what surprise they gazed on me. For you must know that I had the vanity (I call it humour) to do this in my chariot, attended by my servants; and on telling them who I was all appeared to be very happy to see me.'

Had Lackington postponed his tour he might have been more favourably impressed with the work that was being done in at least one of these West of England towns, for it was within the next few years that Joseph Cottle, of Bristol—who was something of an

author himself as well as a bookseller—became acquainted with Wordsworth, Southey and Coleridge, assisting all of them on the road to fame when they needed a helping hand. In his *Biographia Literaria* Coleridge refers to Cottle as 'a friend from whom I never received any advice that was not wise, or a remonstrance that was not gentle and affectionate'. Cottle undid some of the good he had done when he published his volume of recollections a year or so after Coleridge's death, giving to the world his self-righteous details of the poet's opium habits. Before the end of the eighteenth century the House of Longmans bought the copyrights belonging to the Bristol bookseller, but made him a present of Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads*, the first edition of which he had been obliged to 'remainder'. Although the *Ballads* were then set down as being of little pecuniary value, Cottle, who, in turn, handed the copyright back to the authors, described the gift as having been made with Thomas Longman's 'accustomed generosity'. After giving up his Bristol business, Cottle devoted more of his time to writing indifferent verse, drawing upon himself in consequence the contemptuous satire of Byron.

Southey's tribute is better worth remembering: 'Do you suppose, Cottle, that I have forgotten those true and most essential acts of friendship which you showed me when I stood most in need of them. . . . Sure I am that there never was a more generous or kinder heart than yours, and you will believe me when I add that there does not live a man upon earth whom I remember with more gratitude and affection.'



OBVERSE AND REVERSE OF ONE OF THE TRADING TOKENS ISSUED
BY JAMES LACKINGTON AT THE 'TEMPLE OF THE MUSES'

THE ROMANTIC REVIVAL

OUR story of the English book trade during the early nineteenth century revolves for the most part round the work of those authors who, sometimes in spite of themselves, were largely children of the Revolution: Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Scott; Byron, Shelley, and Keats. The same influence stirred the book trade to its depths. Demands increased for greater freedom of individual liberty from the laws of established authority.

One who fell under the revolutionary influences of the time was 'the dirty little Jacobin', as 'Christopher North' called him, who lived to become Sir Richard Phillips. Like other booksellers and publishers before and since Phillips combined the sale of patent medicines with that of books and stationery when he abandoned the hosiery business in Leicester for literary wares and journalism. Not long after starting the *Leicester Herald* in 1792 he was sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment for selling Paine's *Rights of Man*. But Dr. Priestley helped him, and he succeeded in editing the *Herald* from Leicester gaol, afterwards starting a magazine which he called the *Museum*. Then came a ruinous fire, which not only put a stop to both those journals, but ended his publishing career so far as Leicester was concerned.

Fortune favoured him, however, when he came to London and opened a shop in St. Paul's Churchyard. Here, in 1796, he started the *Monthly Magazine*, and made a small, but temporary, fortune by the sale of cheap educational books and the kind of popular literature on which were built the later houses of Chambers and Cassell. Apparently he outlived his republican views, for in 1807, when serving as Sheriff of London, he acted as the bearer of an address from the City Corporation to George III, from whom he then received his knighthood. Phillips is remembered more for his eccentricities than for his services as a pioneer of cheap literature. His vegetarianism invited the ridicule of Tom Moore, who scoffed at his 'Pythagorean diet'; and furnished George Borrow with his character of the vegetarian publisher in *Lavengro*.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the house of Murray

had been in existence some thirty odd years, long enough, as stated on p. 194, to find mention in Boswell's *Johnson*. The founder's original name was MacMurray, but he dropped the prefix when retiring on half-pay as a lieutenant of Marines, and adopting as his emblem a ship in full sail, he bought the old-established business of William Sandby in 1768, on the site in Fleet Street now occupied by the publishing business of Messrs. George Philip and Son. His modest beginning may be illustrated by the shop-card which he printed at the time:

JOHN MURRAY (successor to Mr. Sandby),
Bookseller and Stationer,
At No. 32, over-against St. Dunstan's Church,
in Fleet Street,
London.

Sells all new Books and Publications. Fits up Public or Private Libraries in the neatest manner with Books of the choicest Editions, the best Print, and the richest Bindings.

Also,

Executes East India or foreign Commissions by an assortment of Books and Stationery suited to the Market or Purpose for which it is destined: all at the most reasonable rates.

The first John Murray was only moderately successful, though well supported by his old brother officers. With many of his customers in distant lands, and England at war with France, Holland, Spain, and the American colonies, money came in slowly. It was a hazardous age for the trade in many ways. Consignments of books from the Edinburgh publishers for whom he acted as London agent had to be shipped under an armed convoy: especially when Paul Jones was sweeping our east coast with his small ships of war. Ill-health also handicapped the founder of the firm in his later years, when he published some of his best books, including Mitford's *History of Greece*, and the first volume of Isaac d'Israeli's *Curiosities of Literature*. When he died in 1793 Samuel Highley, his 'faithful shopman', as he was termed in his will, was admitted into partnership with the second John Murray, then a promising schoolboy of fifteen.

Highley was more interested in selling books issued by other publishers than in running risks himself. The partnership became impossible when John Murray II, full of a romantic spirit of enterprise at the very outset of his career, came of age in 1801. 'The truth is', he wrote to Colman, the dramatist, 'that during my minority I have been shackled to a drone of a partner.' Two years later the partners separated, agreeing to draw lots for their house in Fleet Street. The old address fell to Murray, who, now free to run his unfettered course, embarked on the career which was to earn for him the title of 'Glorious John', or, in Scott's phrase, 'Emperor of the West'.

In his early days of freedom London was no longer acknowledged as the undisputed arbiter of English letters. Archibald Constable, who began his eventful career in Edinburgh in the closing years of the eighteenth century, was the first publisher, as Sir Walter Scott afterwards bore witness, to break in upon 'the monopoly of the London trade'. A man of rare sagacity and enterprise, Constable gauged the public taste to a nicety, and paid generously for his books. Gradually collecting the best authors about him, he raised the prestige of the publishing trade throughout Scotland, and made Edinburgh a centre of scholarship and literature. This was after he had established the *Edinburgh Review* in October 1802. It was not long before Scott joined his brilliant band of contributors, and a few years later the publisher issued *Sir Tristram* and *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*. With Scott and the Edinburgh reviewers as names to conjure with, Constable became a power with whom the English publishers had seriously to reckon. The London sale of the *Edinburgh Review* was taken over by Longmans, with a half share in the property, but owing to differences between the two houses the London publication of the review was transferred for a time to John Murray II.

At this time the head of Longmans was Thomas Longman III, Thomas Longman II having died in 1797—a year before Cottle's publication of Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads*, which heralded so unobtrusively the English contribution to the romantic revival. Like Constable and Murray, the third Thomas Longman was destined to play a considerable part in a renaissance which for a time regained for poetry the paramount interest of the English reading public. He took Owen Rees into partnership, and, as mentioned at the close of the last chapter, bought Cottle's copyrights when the Bristol bookseller retired in 1799. In the summer

of 1802, Thomas Longman III paid a visit to Scott, when he secured the copyright of the *Border Minstrelsy*. Three years later his firm was associated with Constable in the publication of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, Scott standing in on the profit-sharing system. As soon as the first edition was exhausted, Longmans offered £500 for the copyright of the work, an offer which Scott accepted; but, as the introduction says, the publishers afterwards 'added £100 in their own unsolicited kindness. It was handsomely given, to supply the loss of a fine horse which broke down suddenly while the author was riding with one of the worthy publishers'. The worthy publisher, adds Lockhart, was Longman's partner, Owen Rees.

Longmans might have drawn Byron, as well as Scott and Wordsworth, into their comfortable net had they not declined his *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, because of its onslaughts on their own poets. The place which Byron might have filled was taken by Tom Moore, who, with the exception of his *Life of Byron*, published all his later books through Longmans. Much might be written of the mutual esteem which marked all the business relations between Moore and his publishers, who set the seal on their connexion by offering the poet £3000 for *Lalla Rookh* before a line of the book was written. 'There has seldom occurred any transaction in which trade and poetry have shone so satisfactorily in each other's eyes', wrote Moore, who, when he found that *Lalla Rookh* was taking him much longer to write than he had anticipated, offered to show his publisher a portion of the work. 'We are certainly impatient for a perusal of your poem', replied Thomas Longman; 'but solely for our gratification. Your sentiments are always honourable.' Happily *Lalla Rookh*, when it appeared in 1817, proved an immediate and memorable success.

It was not until John Murray II had done his utmost to promote a reconciliation between Longmans and Constable that he would undertake the publication of the *Edinburgh Review* in London. Not many years elapsed before Constable's relations became as strained with Murray as they had been with Longmans. Before the Edinburgh potentate established a London branch of his own for the sale of his *Review*, however, the two houses had arranged a joint interest in many books, and Murray had been brought into personal touch with those forces which presently led him to establish the *Quarterly* in 1809 as an antidote to the Whiggism of the older *Edinburgh*.

His long association with Byron had begun at 32 Fleet Street, while *Childe Harold* was being printed. The poet had made a present of the first two cantos to Robert Charles Dallas (whose sister married Captain George Anson Byron), and was highly pleased when he heard that Murray had agreed to publish them. He used to look in at 32 Fleet Street, on his way from the fencing rooms of Angelo and Jackson, and amuse himself with making disconcerting thrusts against the bookshelves while Murray read passages from the proof sheets of the poem. No wonder the publisher afterwards admitted that he was often glad to get rid of him. Both had reason to be satisfied with the success of *Childe Harold*, Byron waking one morning to find himself famous. The first edition of five hundred copies was exhausted almost at once. Dallas, to whom the poet had presented these cantos, benefited to the extent of £600—the sum which Murray eventually paid him for the copyright.

It fell to John Murray II to do more than any other publisher to raise the dignity of his craft when authorship was becoming fashionable. He reminded Byron on one occasion—though their relations generally were of the happiest description—that he forgot in writing to his publisher that he was also addressing a gentleman. Shortly after the production of the first cantos of *Childe Harold* in 1812, Murray moved to No. 50 Albemarle Street. The house had been occupied by William Miller, who had declined to publish *Childe Harold*, and was now retiring from business. Murray took over his copyrights as well as his house, and turned the drawing-room into one of the most famous literary haunts of the age. Here he wrote to a relative, 'I am in the habit of seeing persons of the highest rank in literature and talent, such as Canning, Frere, Mackintosh, Southey, Campbell, Walter Scott, Madame de Staël, Gifford, Croker, Borrow, Lord Byron, and others; thus leading the most delightful life, with means of prosecuting my business in the highest honour and emolument.'

Murray's words illustrate the changed relations which he had so largely helped to bring about between authors and publishers. Instead of the eighteenth-century custom of, say, Dr. Johnson's lifetime, when the literary lion of the day would be surrounded by an association of publishing-booksellers, the publisher's drawing-room was now the centre of an appreciative crowd of authors.

It was in the drawing-room at 50 Albemarle Street that Murray brought about that 'mighty consummation of the meeting of the

two bards', Byron and Scott, in the spring of 1815. The publisher's son, afterwards John Murray III, described in his recollections the odd sight presented by the two greatest poets of the age—both lame—as they stumped downstairs side by side after ending their conversation in the drawing-room. They met there again every day during Scott's visit to London, remaining together for two or three hours at a time.

In the same room, seven years later, took place the dramatic conference of Byron's relatives and executors, at which, after Moore and Hobhouse had nearly come to blows, the manuscript of the unpublished *Memoirs* of the poet was irrevocably burnt. The very fireplace remains to-day in which the book was destroyed. Tom Moore had to borrow £2000 from Longmans to refund the sum which Murray had given him for the manuscript—Byron having made him a present of the copyright—but four years later Murray not only paid off Moore's debt, amounting, with interest, to over £3000, but gave him, in addition, £1600 for his life of the poet. He also bought in the remaining copyrights of Byron's poems in order to issue his complete edition of the works.

Meanwhile Murray, having withdrawn from the Ballantynes, who succeeded Constable as his publishers in Edinburgh, had transferred the whole of his Scottish agency to the house of William Blackwood. The founder of that firm had set up for himself in his native Edinburgh in 1804 when that city—as Mrs. Oliphant says in *The Annals of William Blackwood and Sons*, with which she fittingly closed her long and honourable connexion with the house—was at its highest glory as a centre of intellectual life and influence. He had won something more than a local name as an antiquarian bookseller, having had some useful years of experience in London and Glasgow, as well as in Edinburgh; and had already established his reputation as a publisher on his own account when Murray transferred his Scottish agency to him. Murray, on his side, issued Blackwood's books in London, and thus became the London publisher for Hogg's poems.

In 1816 Blackwood, then thirty years of age, stepped to the front by securing with Murray the publication of the first series of *Tales of My Landlord*. Two years previously Scott, turning to prose when he found his poetry losing some of its vogue after Byron's arrival, had founded the nineteenth-century school of romance with *Waverley*. Published anonymously through Constable, it opened up at once the

new career which was to eclipse Scott's reputation as a poet and, for a time at least, restore his embarrassed financial affairs. Abbotsford was now making dangerous inroads into his income, and the demands for more capital from his printing and bookselling partners, the Ballantynes, were insatiable. How deeply involved were his affairs, even when he was drawing something like £15,000 a year as the author of the Waverley Novels, no one knew.

If his anonymous authorship had been his only secret Scott would have been a far happier man financially. The more dangerous secret—unknown even to his family—was this fatal partnership with the Ballantynes. It began with his friendly interest in his old school-fellow, James Ballantyne, who printed his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* in 1802. This led to the printing business which Scott, with financial assistance, encouraged James to establish in Edinburgh. Six years later, after certain differences with Constable, he was induced to combine publishing and bookselling with the printing concern under the name of John Ballantyne and Co., the only solid capital in which was furnished by Scott himself. No one outside, however, had any inkling of this. The new venture was foredoomed to failure.

With his native chivalry Scott afterwards took the blame on himself for saddling the firm with unsaleable stock and impracticable ideas. But with an improvident partner like James's younger brother John in charge of the bookselling branch there was never a fair chance of success. With all his whimsical and lovable qualities personally, John was the last man in the world to succeed in any business; and James, excellent printer though he may have been, and as devoted as his brother to Scott, was hopeless at accounts. Scott called the elder Ballantyne Aldiborontiphoscophornio; the younger he nicknamed Rigdum-Funnidos; and was fond of them both; but too often had reason to exclaim: 'For heaven's sake, treat me as a man; not as a milch cow!'

It was in the midst of these struggling years of 'John Ballantyne and Co.' that William Blackwood and John Murray secured the first series of *Tales of My Landlord*. Blackwood's associations with the anonymous author did not extend beyond this series. He always took the literary side of his business very seriously, and, when he first saw the sheets of *The Black Dwarf*, ventured boldly to suggest a different conclusion to the story—an alteration probably inspired by Gifford, who seems to have seen the work in proof at Murray's.

Scott was furious. 'Tell him and his coadjutor', he wrote to James Ballantyne, who was acting as his agent in the matter, 'that I belong to the Black Hussars of Literature, who neither give nor receive criticism.' The storm appears to have blown over with the rapid success of the book, but Blackwood's relations with 'plausible James' were never very cordial, and with the fifth edition the publication was carried into the hands of Constable. 'This', writes Mrs. Oliphant, 'was one of those tragically insignificant circumstances which so often shape life apart from any consciousness of ours. Probably ruin would never have overtaken Sir Walter had he been in the steady and careful hands of Murray and Blackwood, for it is unlikely that even the glamour of the great Magician would have turned heads so reasonable and sober.'

The break with Scott, with its temporary triumph for a rival house, and the soreness left by the offensive announcement of the fifth edition long before Blackwood had exhausted the fourth, spurred the rising publisher to take the step which soon led to abundant compensation for the loss even of such a tower of strength as the Laird of Abbotsford. Scott was a giant, but he was not the only literary genius in Edinburgh in those days; and Blackwood, who had just moved from Old Edinburgh to the more fashionable Princes Street in the New Town, resolved to make use of this talent in a new Tory magazine which should counteract the Whig influence of the *Edinburgh Review*. The *Quarterly*, which Murray had founded with a similar object in 1809, was not dashing enough for the young bloods among the Scottish Tories. In *Maga*, which Blackwood started in 1817, they found a ready outlet for their high and irresponsible spirits. A false start was made, under the title of the *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine*, with two incompetent editors; but with the seventh number Blackwood himself took over the editorship, and changed the name to *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. With 'Christopher North' (Professor John Wilson) and John Gibson Lockhart (soon to become Scott's son-in-law) as his chief supporters, he launched out with a number which at once became the talk of the day.

The chief cause of the commotion was the *Chaldee MS.*, the kernel of which was contributed by James Hogg, though Lockhart and Wilson, who were both, as Lockhart himself says, 'sweeping the boards of the Parliament House as briefless barristers', interlarded it with a good deal of devilry of their own. The *Chaldee MS.* was

a *jeu d'esprit* which shocked many good Scotsmen as much by its Biblical phraseology as its extravagance of satire. Friends and foe: alike were made to figure in this daring production. Blackwood himself was included—'and his name was as it had been the colour of ebony'—as well as the rival power, Constable, known already as 'the Crafty', and 'that great Magician which hath his dwelling in the old fastness hard by the River Jordan, which is by the Border'. Many of the jokes have lost their point for the present generation, but on the day on which the *Chaldee MS.* appeared, Edinburgh woke up, Mrs. Oliphant tells us, 'with a roar of laughter, with a shout of delight, with convulsions of rage and offence'. Scott, when he read it, was almost choked with laughter, but others had less cause for merriment, and did not hesitate to say so. Lockhart and Wilson discreetly betook themselves to 'Christopher North's' home in the Lake District as soon as the storm burst. That was the way with these young lions when they had done their roaring; but their editor and publisher faced the storm undismayed, standing like a rock, 'writing letters to all concerned, replying at once to indignant publishers, injured authors, and severe lawyers, with a civility and steadiness that never varied—and covering the real culprits with his ample shield'.

The *Chaldee MS.* was not the only source of trouble in Blackwood's sensational first number. It also contained an offensive attack by Wilson upon Coleridge and his *Biographia Literaria*; and the first of a series of virulent assaults upon the 'Cockney School of Poetry'. Keats, who was branded with the same epithet through his intimacy with the leaders of the so-called 'Cockney School', was similarly attacked in a subsequent number, four months after Crocker's cruel review of *Endymion* in the *Quarterly*.

Keats's first volume of poems, published by the brothers Charles and James Ollier in 1817, had proved a melancholy failure. The Olliers published much of Shelley's work, and it was through Shelley that Keats had been introduced to the firm. He blamed them for their inactivity, and they parted in anger. Keats was more generously treated by Taylor and Hessey, in whose periodical, the *London Magazine*, as will presently be seen, Lamb's *Essays* made their first appearance. Taylor and Hessey not only undertook to publish *Endymion* before it was finished, but allowed Keats to draw upon them in advance. The Olliers, it should be added, also published for Leigh Hunt and, through that author's introduction, the

1818 edition of Charles Lamb's *Works*; but they never prospered, and a few years later the business was wound up.

In the meanwhile, to return to the fortunes of William Blackwood, that worthy could afford to view with composure the storm of abuse which had been roused by the early numbers of his magazine. From Blackwood's point of view the storm was worth all the writs and threats that were hurled at his head. It had sent up the circulation of *Maga* by leaps and bounds, and Blackwood had become a power in the land. Murray, who had taken a share in the reconstructed magazine, grew nervous for his reputation, but, shrewd enough to see the unexpected possibilities arising out of this excellent, if questionable, advertisement, presently paid a thousand pounds for a half-share in the undertaking. The first 'Blackwood gang', however, soon proved too much for the great John Murray. 'My hands are withered by it', he complained to his partner, and in January 1819, matters coming to a crisis, his name disappeared from the magazine.

Blackwood stood to his guns without flinching, keeping as firm a hand as he could meanwhile on his unruly lieutenants. He was also developing the book side of his business, taking shares, as was the custom in those days, in several volumes of Byron, Shelley, and other poets; sharing Susan Ferrier's novels along with Murray; and issuing independently such works as Lockhart's novels, the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, and many volumes reprinted from the magazine.

One worthy who fell out of the ranks at the beginning of the nineteenth century was George Robinson, who earned the name of the 'King of the Booksellers', from the fact that he built up a wholesale trade in Paternoster Row which became the greatest known in the country up to that time. He also bought many sound copyrights, and did a considerable business in publishing. Robinson was succeeded by his son and brother, whom he had taken into partnership in 1784, but the business was 'so immensely large', says Timperley, 'as to exceed their strength; when the grand pillar of the house was removed.' Apart from other misfortunes, their exertions in trade were baffled in a single night by the destruction by fire of a printing office in which they were largely concerned, and they went into bankruptcy: but their assets proved so valuable that they not only settled all their creditors in full, but re-established themselves with flying colours, though neither of the partners lived

long afterwards. The copyright of Vyse's *Spelling Book* alone sold for £2500, with an annuity of fifty guineas to the author.

The 'King of the Booksellers' is apparently associated with 'Peter Pindar's' epigram on the publishers' hypothetical habit of drinking out of authors' skulls; for, when John Wolcot made his name by the vast circulation of his early pieces, Robinson, in partnership with another bookseller named Walker, negotiated with him both for his published and, on certain conditions, for his unpublished works. While this treaty was pending, according to Timperley, the ingenious doctor developed an attack of asthma, which was always at its most distressing stage whenever the publishers were present. Anticipating his early death—though he was then only fifty-seven—they agreed to pay him an annuity of £250 instead of a lump sum down:

Soon after the bond was signed the doctor went to Cornwall, where he recovered his health, and returned to London without any cough, which was far from being a pleasing sight to the persons who had to pay his annuity. One day he called upon Mr. Walker, the manager for the parties, who, surveying him with a scrutinising eye, asked him how he did. 'Much better, thank you', said Wolcot, 'I have taken measure of my asthma; the fellow is troublesome, but I know his strength, and am his master.' 'Oh!' said Mr. Walker gravely, and turned into an adjoining room, where Mrs. Walker, a prudent woman, had been listening to the conversation. Wolcot, aware of the feeling, paid a keen attention to the husband and wife, and heard the latter exclaim, 'There now, didn't I tell you he wouldn't die? Fool that you've been! I knew he wouldn't die.'

Wolcot was not more rabid in his views of the 'Great Trade' than his Scottish contemporary, the poet Campbell, who once drank Napoleon's health because he had ordered a publisher to be shot!¹ The booksellers, he complains bitterly to Scott, are 'ravens, croakers, suckers of innocent blood, and living men's brains'; but Campbell's words are a libel on his own publishers, for, almost invariably, they treated him not only justly, but generously. The cause of the trouble—by no means rare when we come to analyse such cases—

¹ The publisher was Johann Philipp Palm, of Nuremberg. He had issued a pamphlet which roused Napoleon's ire. The death sentence was clumsily carried out on 26th August 1806. Campbell's malicious toast has also been attributed at different times to Balzac and Southey.

was that he rated his works far higher than their market value. In the present instance he had demanded £1000 for his *Specimens of the British Poets*, and the publishers told him that they could not afford so much. Scott, though he knew how to criticise the trade, took a more lenient view of what he once described as 'the most ticklish and unsafe and hazardous of all professions, scarcely with the exception of horse-jockeyship'. In another letter, addressed to Miss Seward in 1807, mainly on the subject of Southey's *Madoc* and the terms which he had made for it with his publishers, Scott writes:

As to the division of the profits, I only think that Southey does not understand the gentlemen of *the trade*, emphatically so called, as well as I do. Without any greater degree of *fourberie* than they conceive the long practice of their brethren has rendered matter of prescriptive right, they contrive to clip the author's proportion of profits down to a mere trifle. It is the tale of the fox that went a-hunting with the lion, upon condition of equal division of the spoil; and yet I do not quite blame the booksellers, when I consider the very singular nature of their *mystery*. A butcher generally understands something of black cattle, and woe betide the jockey who should presume to exercise his profession without a competent knowledge of horse-flesh. But who ever heard of a bookseller pretending to understand the commodity in which he dealt? They are the only tradesmen in the world who professedly, and by choice, deal with what is called 'a pig in a poke'. When you consider the abominable trash which, by their sheer ignorance, is published every year, you will readily excuse them for the indemnification which they must necessarily obtain at the expense of authors of some value. In fact, though the account between an individual bookseller and such a man as Southey may be iniquitous enough, yet I apprehend, that upon the whole the account between *the trade* and the authors of Britain at large is pretty fairly balanced; and what these gentlemen gain at the expense of one class of writers, is lavished, in many cases, in bringing forward other works of little value. I do not know but this, upon the whole, is favourable to the cause of literature. A bookseller publishes twenty books, in hopes of hitting upon one good speculation, as a person buys a parcel of shares in a lottery, in hopes of gaining a prize. Thus the road is open to all, and if the successful candidate is a little fleeced, in order to form petty

prizes to console the losing adventurers, still the cause of literature is benefited, since none is excluded from the privilege of competition.

The last few sentences, at least, are as true to-day as when Scott wrote them nearly a century and a half ago. The sale dinner and the Chapter Coffee House were still flourishing at the beginning of the nineteenth century, as well as the custom of sharing in the production of the more important works. These were sometimes divided into as many as 100 or even 200 shares, which were often sold by auction. Early in the nineteenth century, for example, there was a sale of nearly 1000 shares of the kind, one 26th *Tom Jones* fetching £8; one 100th Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* £11; one 160th Johnson's *Dictionary* £5, and so on. Increasing competition gradually brought this custom into disuse, though it lingered for many years, the last conspicuous instance of partnership publication being Dr. Latham's edition of Johnson's *Dictionary* which appeared in 1866.

Although some of these pleasant social conditions survived the eighteenth century, the co-operative age of bookselling was already passing. Competition increased every year. While the record of new books in the first half of the eighteenth century—not a complete record, be it added, but enough to illustrate our point—yielded an average of but ninety-three a year, the annual output during the first twenty-five years of the nineteenth century increased almost to six hundred—a modest total, it is true, when compared with the twentieth century totals shown on pp. 360–1, but sufficient to introduce increasing stress among competitors. There was a tragic reminder of this in 1814 when William Nelson Gardiner, a Pall Mall bookseller and engraver who had taken his degree of B.A. at Cambridge, committed suicide, leaving a letter declaring that his sun was set for ever—that his business had nearly declined—his catalogue failed—his body covered with disease—and that he had determined to seek the asylum 'where the weary are at rest'. Gardiner's downfall was doubtless largely of his own doing, for Timperley says that he was 'a man of great eccentricity of conduct, regardless of all the forms of civilized life, both in his dress and deportment.'

A more noteworthy venture of the early nineteenth century was that of William Godwin, who, like a later apostle of revolt—Robert Buchanan—started to publish on his own account. In Godwin's

case the scheme was only intended for juvenile books, to include the works which Godwin himself had written under the name of Edward Baldwin. It was begun in 1805, and the prime mover in the business seems to have been his wife—not Mary Wollstonecraft, but her successor, Mrs. Clairmont—the ‘Mrs. Priscilla Pry’ of Charles Lamb’s little sketch in the *New Times*, in 1825. Though there was never much love lost between the Lambs and Mrs. Godwin, it must not be forgotten, as Mr. E. V. Lucas observes in his standard life of Lamb, ‘that had she not insisted upon becoming a publisher of books for children—to help out the precarious Godwin finances—those exquisite things, Charles Lamb’s story of *The Sea Voyage*, and Mary Lamb’s story of “The Sailor Uncle” (in *Mrs. Leicester’s School*) might have remained unwritten.’

Their joint *Tales from Shakespeare* came from the same publisher in 1807, their *Poetry for Children* in 1807; and two years later they issued *Prince Doris*, the fairy-tale which Charles Lamb wrote in rhyme from the French. The Godwin venture lasted considerably longer than Buchanan’s, but with no greater measure of success in the end. Precaution was taken in the first place to omit Godwin’s name from the firm, lest this, with its taint of heterodoxy, should alone be sufficient to damn such an enterprise. An unpretentious start was made in Hanway Street, off Oxford Street, with a manager named Thomas Hodgkins to serve as figure-head. Lamb’s first literary effort for children, the tiny picture-book known as *The King and Queen of Hearts*, must, according to E. V. Lucas, have been among their earliest ventures. It was only in 1891, when the first copy came to light, that Lamb’s share in the work was proved; and the value of the discovery was attested by the fact that this copy realised no less than £226. Its original price, in the ‘copperplate’ series, was a shilling plain, and eighteenpence coloured.

For a time the publishing business gave some promise of success. By the year 1809 Mrs. Godwin, putting her own name to her publications, had moved with the whole concern, together with Godwin’s strangely assorted family, to roomier quarters in Skinner Street, Snow Hill. Here they were living when Shelley first addressed his impetuous letter in 1812, to be followed by his elopement with Mary Godwin and their subsequent marriage. Godwin himself, rarely free from financial embarrassments during all these years, and not above extorting money from his generous if unconventional son-in-law, received little help from the publishing business in its later

years, and in 1822 became bankrupt. It is pleasant to find the name of John Murray as a subscriber of £10 towards the fund which was then raised, thanks largely to Charles Lamb, in the unsuccessful effort to set the worn-out philosopher on his feet again.

A few years before he broke with Blackwood, in 1819, John Murray added Jane Austen to his list by publishing *Emma*, the last of her novels to be issued during her lifetime. This was her fourth to appear, all anonymously, but with nothing like the popularity of the anonymous novelist across the Border, who gave *Emma* a warm-hearted review in the *Quarterly*. According to Smiles the profits of the four novels published during Jane Austen's lifetime did not exceed £700. The first three, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Mansfield Park*, were all published at the Military Library, Whitehall, by T. Egerton, whose reluctance to take a reasonable risk with new editions may, Geoffrey Keynes suggests in his bibliography of Jane Austen, have determined her to forsake him and turn to John Murray as her publisher. Her two posthumous books, *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey*, were also issued by Murray. *Northanger Abbey*, though one of the last to be printed, was the first of the six to be written. After keeping it in manuscript for years, its unassuming author sold it in 1803 for £10 to Crosby and Co., of Stationers' Hall Court. That firm, however, never ventured to publish it, and after waiting in vain until 1816, Jane Austen bought it back for the same sum.

The one outstanding mistake of the second John Murray's life was his ill-advised venture in daily journalism. Encouraged by the success of the *Quarterly*, and no longer holding a share in *Blackwood's*, he happened to mention to young Disraeli one day that he would gladly interest himself in some journal which appeared more frequently than his own review. The Murrays and the Disraelis had been intimate friends since the founder of the house published Isaac d'Israeli's *Curiosities of Literature* in 1791. The elder d'Israeli had been one of the second John Murray's marriage trustees, and the younger members of both families met on the friendliest terms. When Murray mentioned the matter of another journal, Benjamin Disraeli was dabbling in high finance, and full of ambition. The remark at once suggested the idea of planning a daily newspaper with Murray in the Conservative interest. He was little more than twenty at the time, but he carried Murray with him by his infectious enthusiasm—or 'unrelenting excitement and importunity', as the

publisher afterwards put it. Murray himself had high hopes at first that he could run a paper which should rival *The Times*.

'You know well enough', he wrote, in explaining the 'Great Plan' to Scott, 'that the business of a publishing bookseller is not in his shop, or even in his connexion, but in his brain.' Murray's brain was perhaps somewhat turned at this time by dazzling pictures of potential profits, and promises of support that remained unfulfilled. After indefatigable efforts in the preliminary arrangements both at home and abroad, young Disraeli suddenly dropped out of the scheme, together with the financial partner whom he had brought into the venture. It was a period of grave crisis in the city, culminating in December 1825 in panic. The crash came which had for some time been unavoidable, 'spreading disaster far and wide', to quote from the standard memoir of the future statesman by W. F. Monypenny and G. E. Buckle, published by John Murray iv, 'and burying Disraeli's hopes in the general ruin'. The publisher, however, was now so far committed to the enterprise, with printing offices, editorial staffs, and the like, all engaged, that he decided to carry on alone.

The *Representative* made its first appearance on 25th January 1826. It was a failure from the beginning. In six months, after sinking £26,000, and breaking down in health under the strain, Murray cut his losses and brought the paper to an end. 'I have cut the knot of evil which I could not untie', he wrote to Washington Irving, whose *Bracebridge Hall* and other works he published, 'and am now, by the blessing of God, again restored to reason and the shop.' Here his sounder instincts and common sense enabled him to tide over the troubled year which saw so many other publishing and printing houses tottering in the financial crisis, selling their stocks for whatever they would fetch to save themselves if possible.

The 'extraneous' Thomas Tegg made some of his best 'remainder' bargains during this panic. He bought the pick of Scott's novels, for instance, at fourpence apiece, afterwards reselling at a handsome profit. 'I was the broom that swept the booksellers' warehouses', he wrote in his autobiography. The panic in the city was the sequel to several years of wild speculation recalling the times of the South Sea Bubble. Booksellers and publishers, like other men of business, had been infected with the fever, risking their resources in mines, hops, and all manner of ventures foreign to their regular calling. 'Persons of any foresight who knew the infinitely curious

links by which booksellers, and printers, and papermakers (and therefore authors) are bound together, for good and evil', wrote Lockhart in his *Life of Scott*, 'already began to prophesy that whenever the crash, which must come ere long, should arrive, its effect would be felt far and wide among all classes connected with the productions of the press.'

The prophets proved dismally true. Neither Constable nor his London agents, Hurst, Robinson and Co., whose traffic in bills and counter-bills had long since undermined their stability, could save themselves. With them collapsed James Ballantyne and Co., thus involving Scott, and for the first time revealing the secret of his financial interest in that printing firm, as well as the authorship of the *Waverley* novels. John Ballantyne had not lived to see this day of reckoning. He died in 1821, bankrupt; yet so ignorant of the state of his finances that he left a worthless will, bequeathing his old friend and patron £2000 towards the completion of his new library at Abbotsford. The wretched bookselling business, which brought Scott to the verge of bankruptcy, had long since been abandoned, Constable—cunningly persuaded by John that it was the only way to prevent his rivals, Murray and Blackwood, from securing the second series of *Tales of My Landlord*—buying the whole of the remaining unsaleable rubbish of 'John Ballantyne and Co.' in 1818 for £5270. Once before he had come to the rescue of the firm in a similar manner, thus healing the breach with Scott which had started this ill-conceived concern. Although John's death a few years later removed some of Scott's responsibilities—he was giving his services as editor of Ballantyne's *Novelist's Library*, which he had planned solely for that bookseller's benefit—it filled him with a sense of deep personal loss. 'I feel', he whispered in Lockhart's ear at the graveside, 'as if there would be less sunshine for me from this day henceforth.' It was only when the storm burst in 1826 that he realised the extent to which Constable's affairs had by degrees become bound up with those of the great printing concern in which Sir Walter had all along been James's predominant partner. Scott so prided himself on his shrewdness in smaller points of worldly interest that his ignorance in this connexion remains, in Lockhart's phrase, as 'the enigma of his personal history'.

There is no need to repeat the heroic tale of how nobly the novelist faced the situation, determined to pay off every penny of Ballantyne's debts as well as his own: some £130,000 in all; and

how at long last—though not in his lifetime—he succeeded. Constable died in the following year, ultimately paying 2s. 9d. in the pound on much heavier debts than Scott's. His colleague, Robert Cadell, who had dissolved partnership in the bankruptcy, now became Scott's publisher. Together they bought back for £8500 his principal copyrights, which had been put up to auction. When, a little later, Scott asked Murray if he would sell his fourth share of *Marmion*, that publisher rose handsomely to the occasion: 'So highly do I estimate the honour of being, even in so small a degree, the publisher of the author of the poem', he wrote, 'that no pecuniary consideration whatever can induce me to part with it. But there is a consideration of another kind, which, until now, I was not aware of, which would make it painful to me if I were to retain it a moment longer. I mean, the knowledge of its being required by the author, into whose hands it was spontaneously resigned in the same instant that I read his request.' Long before the crash in 1826, Murray had frequently remonstrated with the Edinburgh firms on the risks they were running in trading beyond their capital. Gladly as he would have shared in issuing the later works of the author of *Waverley*, he had abandoned that ambition rather than involve himself further in an alliance which he foresaw could only lead to disaster.

Charles Lamb, who bore a grudge against the trade, took a malicious view of the affair in a letter to Wordsworth: 'When Constable fell from heaven, and we all hoped Baldwin was next, I turned a slight stave to the words in *Macbeth* (D'Avenant's) to be sung by a chorus of authors:

What should we do when Booksellers break?
We should rejoice.'

Scott was more generous than Lamb. 'While I live', he wrote to Lockhart, 'I shall regret the downfall of Constable, for never did there exist so intelligent and so liberal an establishment. They went too far when money was plentiful, that is certain; yet if every author in Britain had taxed himself half a year's income, he should have kept up the house which first broke in upon the monopoly of the London trade, and made letters what they now are.'

Lamb did not cry out against the booksellers without reason. Baldwin, Cradock and Joy, who first published the new *London*

Magazine in which *Elia* was born, appear to have been shamefully backward in their payments. When their successors, as will be seen in due course, unsuccessfully opposed the publication by Moxon of the *Last Essays of Elia*, Lamb mentioned that he should have received £30 profit out of the publication of the first volume, but that he never received the money. Though he could rail against the trade at large, he was uncommonly kind to certain of its members. There was William Hone, for instance, remembered now chiefly for his *Every-day Book*, and other miscellanies of the kind, but known in the early nineteenth century as the bookseller-satirist of the Regency. He had the political outspokenness without the inconstancy of the more celebrated bookseller-agitator, William Cobbett, who returned from America—where he had been a bookseller and publisher on the loyalist side, first at Philadelphia, and afterwards at New York—about the time that Hone was starting his own chequered career in Lambeth Walk. This was in the year 1800, after which Hone made many moves, but never a success. His trial, in 1817, for writing and publishing squibs against the Government and the Church, made him a popular hero at the time, and led to a subscription for his benefit which amounted to over £3000. His best-known production was *The Political House that Jack Built*, which ran to over fifty editions, and, like many of his other satires, was illustrated by his friend Cruikshank. It was in his later years, when he had practically retired from controversial life, that he started his weekly miscellany, the *Every-day Book*, and made the acquaintance of Charles Lamb, to whom his rich store of antiquarian lore made a powerful appeal.

The *Every-day Book* was not very successful; his debts increased until he was thrown into the King's Bench; and it was during his three years' imprisonment that he not only finished the first miscellany, but wrote and issued the *Table-Book*. Hone found a good friend in 'Elia', to whom, as well as to Mary Lamb, he dedicated the *Every-day Book*; and whose enthusiastic admirer he remained for the rest of his life. Lamb was prominent among those who endeavoured to give Hone a fresh start in business on his release from the King's Bench, abandoning bookselling as hopeless in his case, and setting him up at a coffee house in Gracechurch Street. But Hone was no more successful here than among his old books and newspapers, and struggled on mainly by the help of his pen, Thomas Tegg giving him £500 for his *Year Book*, and also buying

the copyright of his *Every-day Book*. Hone finally came under the influence of Edward Irving, by whom he was converted, his last public appearance being made as an occasional preacher at the Weigh-House Chapel, Eastcheap.

Thomas Tegg, who made large sums by Hone's miscellanies, had travelled as a bookseller with an auction licence in his early career, and his nightly auctions when he settled down in Cheapside attracted crowds of bidders. After Trafalgar he sold 50,000 copies at sixpence each of *The Whole Life of Nelson*, which he rushed through the press at a few hours' notice. When Tegg—the original of Twigg in Hood's novel *Tilney Hall*—abandoned the 'auctioneering way', and settled down to publishing in the Old Mansion House, he made a fortune with his cheap reprints and abridgments of popular works.¹ Another contemporary who prospered in the same way was John Cooke, to whose edition of the British poets in sixpenny parts, Leigh Hunt pays tribute in his autobiography. Cooke learnt his trade with Alexander Hogg, whose cheap 'Paternoster Row' numbers were among the first reprints to appear in weekly parts. Birrell praises all these men in one of his essays² as the forerunners of the popular reprinters of to-day; but they took little heed, as a rule, of the authors whose works had helped to make their fortunes. Carlyle drove this point home in his petition to the Commons on the Copyright Bill: 'May it please your Honourable House', the petition concluded, 'to forbid all Thomas Teggs, and other extraneous persons . . . to steal from him his small winnings, for a space of sixty years, at shortest. After sixty years, unless your Honourable House provide otherwise, they may begin to steal.'

The publisher who owed the deepest debt of gratitude to Charles Lamb was Edward Moxon, whose house in Dover Street became one of the literary landmarks of London. There are points of strong resemblance between Edward Moxon and Robert Dodsley. Both had volumes of their own verse published before they set up in business for themselves, making a point in each case of their humble origin. Moxon issued his first book, *The Prospect, and other Poems*, in 1826, while learning his business at Longmans, as the work of 'a very young man, unlettered and self-taught', and, like Dodsley, was helped to a shop of his own by the generosity of an elder poet. *Elia*

¹ On his death in 1845 Thomas Tegg was succeeded by his son William Tegg, who was more sedate in his methods, and was the author besides of various compilations of his own. William Tegg lived until 1895.

² *Books Old and New*.

took an interest in Moxon when the future publisher was still at Longmans, who, in 1808, had issued Lamb's *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets*. 'Moxon is but a tradesman in the bud yet', he writes in a characteristic letter introducing him to Wordsworth in 1826, 'and retains his virgin honesty.' Lamb, with all his loveliness, could be very severe on the publishers. 'For my part', he says in the same letter, 'the failure of a Bookseller is not the most unpalatable accident of mortality:

Sad, but not the saddest,
The desolation of a hostile city.'

And one of his best-known letters contains his grim warning to Bernard Barton against the literary life:

Throw yourself on the world without any rational plan of support, beyond what the chance employ of booksellers would afford you! ! !

Throw yourself rather, my dear sir, from the steep Tarpeian rock, slap-dash headlong upon iron spikes. If you had but five consolatory minutes between the desk and the bed, make much of them, and live a century in them, rather than turn slave to the booksellers. They are Turks and Tartars when they have poor authors at their beck. Hitherto you have been at arm's length from them. Come not within their grasp. I have known many authors want for bread, some repining, others envying the blessed security of a counting house, all agreeing they would rather have been tailors, weavers,—what not, rather than the things they were. I have known some starved, some to go mad, one dear friend literally dying in a workhouse. You know not what a rapacious, dishonest set these booksellers are. Ask even Southey, who (a single case almost) has made a fortune by book drudgery, what he has found them. Oh, you know not (may you never know!) the miseries of subsisting by authorship. 'Tis a pretty appendage to a situation like yours or mine; but a slavery, worse than all slavery, to be a bookseller's dependant, to drudge your brains for pots of ale and breasts of mutton, to change your free thoughts and voluntary numbers for ungracious task-work. Those fellows hate *us*. The reason I take to be, that contrary to other trades, in which the master gets all the credit, (a jeweller or silversmith

for instance,) and the journeyman, who really does the fine work, is in the background,—in *our* work the world gives all the credit to us, whom *they* consider as *their* journeymen, and therefore do they hate us, and cheat us, and oppress us, and would wring the blood of us out, to put another sixpence in their mechanic pouches! I contend that a bookseller has a *relative honesty* towards authors, not like his honesty to the rest of the world. Baldwin, who first engaged me as *Elia*, has not paid me up yet, (nor any of us without repeated mortifying appeals,) yet how the knave fawned when I was of service to him! Yet I dare say the fellow is punctual in settling his milk-score, etc.

Keep to your bank, and the bank will keep you. Trust not to the public; you may hang, starve, drown yourself, for any thing that worthy *personage* cares. I bless every star that Providence, not seeing good to make me independent, has seen it next good to settle me upon the stable foundation of Leadenhall. Sit down, good B. B., in the banking office. What! is there not from six to eleven P.M. six days in the week, and is there not all Sunday? Fie, what a superfluity of man's time, if you could think so!—enough for relaxation, mirth, converse, poetry, good thoughts, quiet thoughts. Oh, the corroding, torturing, tormenting thoughts that disturb the brain of the unlucky wight who must draw upon it for daily sustenance! Henceforth I retract all my fond complaints of mercantile employment; look upon them as lovers' quarrels. I was but half in earnest. Welcome dead timber of a desk, that makes me live. A little grumbling is a wholesome medicine for the spleen; but in my inner heart do I approve and embrace this our close but unharassing way of life. I am quite serious. If you can send me Fox, I will not keep it *six weeks*, and will return it, with warm thanks to yourself and friend, without blot or dog's ear. You will much oblige me by this kindness.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB

Wordsworth gave Moxon, whose volume of verse had been mentioned in Lamb's letter of introduction, very similar advice: 'Fix your eye upon acquiring independence by an honourable business,' he wrote, 'and let the Muse come after, rather than go before.' Samuel Rogers, to whom young Moxon had also been introduced by Lamb, and to whom he had dedicated his first volume of verse,

was more practical in his advice, lending him the £500 with which he was presently established in a business of his own at 64 New Bond Street.¹ That was in 1830. The new publisher's first venture, appropriately, was Charles Lamb's *Album Verses*, dedicated to Moxon himself, who had paid a similar compliment to Lamb in the previous year, in another of his own poems, entitled *Christmas*. Rogers further proved his confidence in his *protégé* by entrusting him with the elaborate edition of his last book, *Italy*, which cost its author £10,000 to produce. *Italy* was a failure, but Rogers subsequently recouped himself—and through the same publisher—with the sumptuous edition of his works, in two volumes, at a cost of £15,000, with illustrations by Turner and Stothard.

Three years after starting in business Moxon published *The Last Essays of Elia*, though not without a good deal of opposition on the part of the original publisher, John Taylor, the head of the firm of Taylor and Hessey, in whose periodical, the *London Magazine*, the *Essays* originally appeared. The *London Magazine* was first published by Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, under the editorship of John Scott, who was mortally wounded in the duel with John Gibson Lockhart's second, as a result of the squabble between *Blackwood* and the *London* magazines. Following Scott's tragic death the new magazine was taken over by Taylor and Hessey, who possessed a sound reputation both in the trade and the literary world. 'After the good old fashion of the Great Trade', says Talfourd, 'these genial booksellers used to assemble their contributors round their hospitable table in Fleet Street', where De Quincey, on coming to London, 'found an admiring welcome.' The publishers took additional quarters, when they bought the magazine, at 13 Waterloo Place. It was at the monthly dinners there that Charles Lamb met his friends and colleagues, Thomas Hood, the sub-editor of the magazine—John Taylor himself being misguided enough to assume the chief literary control—Bernard Barton, Cary, the translator of Dante, and, before his shameful career of crime, 'Janus Weathercock', otherwise Thomas Griffiths Wainewright.

Young Moxon found other attractions at the Lambs' than the

¹ Rogers launched another literary bookseller in business—Thomas Miller, who wrote a number of novels and children's books, as well as poems. He was granted a pension by Disraeli, and lived until 1874. There was an earlier bookseller of the name of Thomas Miller (1731–1804) who not only combined grocery with bookselling, but formed a remarkable collection of Roman and English coins. It was his son William Miller who started publishing in Albemarle Street, where, as recorded earlier in this chapter, he was succeeded in 1812 by John Murray.

brother and sister who had taken such a kindly interest in him. Emma Isola, their adopted daughter, was wooed and won by 'the poet among booksellers' shortly after he had moved to Dover Street. Charles found it hard to crack his jokes at the thought of losing her, 'my old and only walk-companion', whose mirthful spirits were the 'youth of our house.' Yet in his unselfish heart he was truly glad, for he told Crabb Robinson before this happened that he wanted 'to see her well married, great as the loss would be to him.' So he put on a brave face, and sent several charming letters to Moxon on his wedding, which took place in 1833. Lamb only lived to the end of the following year, murmuring Moxon's name among other friends remembered at the last. He left his books to the publisher. On the death of his sister, with whom Moxon and his wife kept in touch till her death in 1847, Mrs. Moxon became her residuary legatee.

THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

FOR all essential purposes Great Britain's contribution to the Romantic Revival ceased with the death of Coleridge in the summer of 1834. Scott had preceded him at Abbotsford by two years; Byron at Missolonghi by eight; Keats and Shelley in Italy by some nine or ten years. Wordsworth still had sixteen to run, but had written most of his best work. After the rare outpourings of the earlier period the next decade of English literature was comparatively barren, and the life of the book trade correspondingly dull. Poetry was out of fashion. Even the second John Murray, the Prince of Publishers, whose experience with Crabbe—as Lockhart warned him when there was some talk of a new edition of Wordsworth's poems—was 'a lesson of much caution', now made it a rule to decline all original works of that kind.

Crabbe's last volume had been issued by Murray in 1819, and it was by the publisher's advice that the original title, *Remembrances*, had been changed to *Tales of the Hall*. For this collection and the remaining copyright of Crabbe's earlier poems Murray had paid Crabbe the handsome sum of £3000. The poet's joy on receiving such unexpected wealth was so great that he insisted on setting out to Trowbridge at once in order to show the bills for that amount to his son John. 'They would hardly believe in his good luck at home if they did not see the bills', wrote Tom Moore to Murray in describing the incident. The publisher lost heavily by the deal; but his wholehearted appreciation of genius and its works not infrequently, as in this instance, raised him, in Smiles's phrase, 'above the atmosphere of petty calculation'. Nevertheless he was forced by circumstances in his declining years to look 'with rather a jaundiced eye on poetry and fiction', as George Paston remarks in the *Cornhill*.¹ He transferred the copyright of all his novels—even Jane Austen's—to Bentley, and, for poetry, contented himself with the works of the blameless Crabbe. So discouraging was the demand for Wordsworth's verse that it took four years to exhaust the collected edition of five hundred copies issued in 1820 by Longmans,

¹ *From the Archives of Albemarle Street*, August 1930.

who had republished the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1800, and brought out the later volumes of his verse. The poet himself told Moore in 1835 that his works had not up to that time earned him above £1000.

When young Borrow came to London to seek his fortune with his box of manuscripts and his letter of introduction to Sir Richard Phillips—once the ‘dirty little Jacobin’—that publisher blighted his hopes by declaring emphatically that literature was a drug on the market: that Borrow had better write something in *The Dairyman’s Daughter*¹ style. ‘I always told you’, said Isaac d’Israeli, in referring to Phillips in a letter to the second John Murray, ‘he wanted literary taste . . . he thinks all *belles-lettres* are nonsense, and decries the existence of taste.’ He set young Borrow to the hack work which resulted in the six volumes of *Celebrated Trials*, for which he paid him £50, a sum which had to include the purchase of all books and other expenses in which the author was necessarily involved. Borrow also contributed to Phillips’s short-lived *Universal Review*, but the hardest task of all, and one which brought their unhappy association to a close, was that of attempting to translate into German the publisher’s own philosophical work. He fell into safer hands later, when John Murray became his publisher.

While the barren years were passing, the seeds of the rich harvest of mid-Victorian verse were being sown in various scattered fields. Some of the first-fruits were produced by Edward Moxon in Dover Street, where he still carried on his business after the death of Charles Lamb. It was to Moxon that the pioneer and founder of the new school, Tennyson, sent his 1833 volume of poems, the publication being negotiated by Arthur Henry Hallam on the understanding that author and publisher should share in the risks and profits—‘neither of which’, to quote from the letter printed for the first time in T. J. Wise’s bibliography of Tennyson, ‘I should fancy, would be very considerable.’ His earliest verse, in *Poems by Two Brothers*, had been issued in 1827 in Louth, by J. and J. Jackson, and brought him £11. After the 1833 volume of poems, Tennyson’s association with Moxon remained unbroken until the publisher’s death in 1858. So little was poetry appreciated in his younger days, however, that Tennyson had to wait ten years or more before he could afford to marry.

¹ One of the annals of the poor written by the evangelical divine, Legh Richmond, who died in 1827. *The Dairyman’s Daughter* was one of the ‘best-sellers’ of the early nineteenth century, millions of copies being sold both at home and abroad. It is still published.

Robert Browning also profited little by his poems at this period. He became associated with Moxon eight years after Tennyson, but did not stay with him so long. His first completed work, *Pauline*, had been published anonymously in 1833 at the expense of his aunt, Mrs. Silverthorne; and had attracted no attention, save through W. J. Fox, who gave it an enthusiastic review in the *Monthly Repository*, and helped the poet to find a publisher—Effingham Wilson—for his next book, *Paracelsus*. It was with *Sordello*, which followed in 1840, that Browning began his connexion with Moxon. The poet was still without honour in his country—neglected by the reading public and scoffed at by the critics. Moxon now suggested that Browning should issue his poems in pamphlet form, at a cost which should not exceed twelve or fifteen pounds each; and Browning agreed, the *Bells and Pomegranates* appearing in this form, in a series of eight numbers, beginning with *Pippa Passes*, and extending from 1841 to 1846. They were issued at Browning's expense, but yielded no profit, apparently either for poet or publisher. Moxon also published *The Statue and the Bust*, but when Browning offered him the collected edition of his works in 1848—on the understanding that it was to be issued at the publisher's risk—he declined; upon which Browning went over to Dickens's publishers, Chapman and Hall, who accepted the proposal. Twenty years later Smith and Elder became Browning's publishers, the poet forming an intimate friendship with George Smith which closed only with his death.

Moxon's other authors included Southey, Barry Cornwall, Monckton Milnes. Wordsworth was beginning to come into his own when he transferred his allegiance to Moxon, who paid him £1000 for the new edition of his works which he issued in six volumes in 1836-7—more than the poet had hitherto received for his verse in the whole of his career. The venture appears, however, to have proved a poor investment from the publisher's point of view. He was also associated with Disraeli, publishing his *Revolutionary Epick* in 1834, and even receiving an offer from that versatile genius—then thirty years old—to be taken into partnership, an offer which Moxon declined, 'not thinking', as he told Greville in 1847, 'that he was prudent enough to be trusted'.

Moxon died in 1858, shortly after issuing Hogg's *Life of Shelley*, and Trelawney's *Records of Shelley, Byron and the Author*. In his later years, realising how hard it was to live by poetry alone, he developed

a department for what has been called the 'household stuff' of literature, among his more notable ventures being Haydn's *Dictionary of Dates*. A text-book which secures acceptance as a recognised authority on its subject—best of all a standard cookery book—is worth far more, from the commercial point of view, than all but the rarest treasures of imaginative literature.

A story is still told of a woman writer—not Mrs. Beeton, as some chroniclers have stated—who called at Longmans in the early 'forties of last century, and offered the publishers a book of poems. Verse had long since lost its vogue. 'My dear madam', said the reigning head of the house, Thomas Longman iv, 'it is no good bringing me poetry; nobody wants poetry now. Bring me a cookery book, and we might come to terms.' He spoke more in jest than in earnest, but Eliza Acton—for that was his visitor, a writer of much fugitive verse—took him at his word, and in due course returned with her *Modern Cookery*, which was first published in 1845, and, brought up to date at various periods, sold steadily until the early years of the twentieth century. On the strength of this success the publisher gratified his author's ambition by publishing a volume of her poems, but while the cookery book ran merrily through one edition after another, the verses fell practically unheeded from the press. The publisher had gauged the public taste exactly.

Beeton's, first issued in 1861, is another book which must have proved a gold-mine in itself. In this case the author was the publisher's own wife, the publisher being S. O. Beeton, whose business in Fleet Street was afterwards taken over by Ward and Lock. Ward, Lock and Co., as the firm is now styled, also bought many of the copyrights of Edward Moxon; William Tegg, son of Thomas Tegg; A. D. Innes and Co., and other publishers when, in due course, these found their way into the market.

Thomas Longman iv, whose taste for good 'household stuff' has just been mentioned, succeeded to the title on the death of the third Thomas Longman in 1842. The imprint of the firm had now changed to Longman, Brown, Green, and Longman, with the fourth Thomas Longman and his brother William, who enjoyed a considerable reputation as a historian and mountaineer, at the head of affairs. To this reign belongs the great Macaulay epoch, beginning in 1842, only two months after the death of the third Thomas Longman, with the publication of the *Lays of Ancient Rome*. Macaulay, little suspecting their pecuniary worth, had made a

present of the *Lays* to Longmans, merely stipulating that they should publish them. The publishers returned the copyright as soon as the small first edition had been taken up, and the work must eventually have brought Macaulay and his heirs very considerable sums. In 1843, though hard at work on his *History*, and very dubious as to the permanent value of what he regarded as his ephemeral work, Macaulay was forced by the pirated editions in America to authorise Longmans to publish a collected edition of the essays which he had contributed to the *Edinburgh Review*. The result, as everyone knows, was a book which at once made a place for itself as a classic.

Sir George Trevelyan's life of his uncle shows by many references how close and cordial was the long association between Macaulay and his publishers. The best-remembered incident in their business dealings was the signing of the cheque for £20,000, dated 13th March 1856, which Longmans paid the author as his share, merely 'on account', of the profits of the third and fourth volumes of his *History*.

A later landmark in the history of the firm during this period was the publication of *Lothair*. Another publisher had offered Disraeli £10,000 for a novel immediately after his resignation as Prime Minister in 1868. Though he declined the offer he wrote the political novel which, two years later, took the town by storm and continued its triumph abroad. Eighty thousand copies were sold in six months in America alone. Disraeli's profits amounted to something over £6000 in the first four years. In 1877 the publishers paid him a further £2100 for the copyright of all ten volumes of his novels. That was the year in which William Longman died. His brother, the fourth Thomas Longman, only survived him two years, being succeeded in 1879 by his elder son, Thomas Norton Longman, who was destined to remain head of the house until his retirement in 1919.

In the meantime there had also been the inevitable dynastic changes in the house of Murray. 'Glorious John' had died in 1843, to be succeeded by his son, John Murray III, who was only four years old when his father moved in 1812 to Albemarle Street, where, twelve years later, he witnessed the burning of Byron's *Memoirs*. Many precious relics of these and later days are preserved at No. 50—the Byron manuscripts, the silver urn which the poet sent to his publisher from Greece, containing some hemlock seeds gathered

by Byron at Athens in 1811—they were the direct descendants, he said, of the hemlock which poisoned Socrates—the manuscript of Scott's *Abbot*, Burns's *Commonplace Book*; Southey's article on Nelson in the *Quarterly*, with the additions which transformed it into one of the masterpieces of English biography, and other treasures.

It was the third John Murray who inaugurated the guide-books which carried the name of Murray all over the globe. He started the series in his father's lifetime with the *Handbook for Holland*, which he wrote himself in 1836, following this up with three other volumes from his own pen—*France*, *South Germany*, and *Switzerland*. When pressure of business prevented him from writing further volumes he continued the series with the help of various distinguished authors, some of whose works, such as Ford's *Spain*, have since become standard books. The series was so successful that the publisher was able to build his home, 'Newstead', at Wimbledon, out of the profits. Hence it was nicknamed *Handbook Hall*.

The reign of John Murray III is also associated with the fine series of illustrated travel books which includes such names as Livingstone, Humboldt, Du Chaillu, Bates, Yule, and Mrs. Bishop. He also published Darwin's *Origin of Species* and *Descent of Man*; Borrow's *Lavengro* and *Wild Wales*; the great series of dictionaries associated with the name of Sir William Smith, and a host of other works which were sound and scholarly but without the glamour attaching to so many of the volumes issued by his father. Borrow's first books, *The Gypsies of Spain* and *The Bible in Spain*, were both brought out in the lifetime of John Murray II. His treatment in the Albemarle Street house was very different from that which he received at the hands of Phillips, some seventeen years before, as described on p. 233.

Piccadilly was one of the highways of the book trade long before Moxon and Murray settled in its neighbourhood. John Hatchard started business there in 1797, almost next door to Wright's shop, where the *Anti-Jacobin* was published, and where Wolcot took his revenge on Gifford, the editor, for his insulting *Epistle to Peter Pindar*, striking him on the head with a stick, and being himself thrown into the gutter for his pains. It was at Wright's, too, that the *Intercepted Letters* of Bonaparte made their sensational appearance. Hatchard's became a fashionable meeting-place for book-lovers and politicians soon after it was started. Here Isaac d'Israeli, as

described by his son, was introduced to the much-abused Laureate, Pye:

In those days when literary clubs did not exist, and when even political ones were very limited and exclusive in their character, the booksellers' shops were social rendezvous. Debrett's¹ was the chief haunt of the Whigs, Hatchard's, I believe, of the Tories. It was at the latter house that my father made the acquaintance of Mr. Pye, then publishing his translation of Aristotle's *Poetics*, and so strong was party feeling at that period, that one day walking together down Piccadilly, Mr. Pye, stopping at the door of Debrett, requested his companion to join, adding that if he (Pye) had the audacity to enter more than one person would tread upon his toes.

Hatchard's, like the rival shops, dealt largely in pamphlets, for the vogue of that class of literature had not yet given way before the rising tide of newspapers and magazines. Nearly all Canning's publications in this form bore Hatchard's name, and many notable books of the day were published by the same house. The founder had a reputation for piety which leaned towards the Low Church School, and brought him the useful patronage of the Clapham Sect—Wilberforce, Zachary Macaulay, and Henry Thornton—among whom circulated the *Christian Observer*, of which he had become publisher. Young Macaulay did his precocious book-buying here, and Hannah More, who took such an interest in his intellectual welfare, also made Hatchard her publisher.

More successful than any of their other publications was the *Proverbial Philosophy* of Martin Tupper, the first of the four series of which ran through no fewer than sixty editions. This while Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Browning were a drug on the market! Tupper's first volume, *Sacra Poesis*, was published by Nisbet in 1832, and a hundred years hence, says the complacent author in his autobiography, 'may be a treasure to some bibliomaniac'. Tupper's

¹ John Debrett had succeeded John Almon, the bookseller and journalist, who gave loyal support to the Whigs while in opposition, and the close confidant of Wilkes, who had reason for calling him his 'friend, and an honest worthy bookseller'. He compiled, among other works, *The Remembrancer: a monthly collection of Papers relating to American Independence*, and *The Correspondence of Wilkes and his Friends*, in five volumes (1805). He also published *The New Peerage* in three volumes, but this was apparently not his own work. Debrett improved upon it with his own *Peerage of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, which made its first appearance in two volumes in 1802. His *Baronetage* followed six years later.

'chief authorial work', as he describes his best-known volume of platitudes, began its appearance in serial form in 1838, through Joseph Rickerby, who issued his volume of *Geraldine and other Poems* in the same year; but Tupper left him as 'an unfruitful publisher', and began his connexion with Hatchard—'with whom', he writes, 'I had a long and prosperous career, receiving annually from £500 to £800 a year, and in the aggregate benefiting both—for we shared equally—by something like £10,000 apiece. When that good old man, Grandfather Hatchard', he writes with the unctuous vanity which makes it impossible to read his autobiography with patience, 'first saw me he placed his hands on my dark hair and said with tears in his eyes, "You will thank God for this book when your head comes to be as white as mine." Let me gratefully acknowledge that he was a true prophet.'

Things did not work so smoothly after 'Grandfather Hatchard's' death, and Tupper went over to Moxon's, where his third series was published. This, however, was not a financial success, so the fourth series went to Ward and Lock, with better result, though Tupper's popularity was now on the wane; and when Cassell presently produced the complete edition of the work in one volume it had to be 'remaindered'.

John Hatchard's association with poets was not confined to Pye and Tupper. It is strange to meet in such company the 'meekest of mankind', George Crabbe, 'nature's sternest painter, but her best'. Crabbe's connexion with Hatchard began after the death of his earlier publisher and friend, James Dodsley, to whom he had been introduced by his generous patron Burke. His first venture from the new address was *The Parish Register*, which appeared in 1807, bound up with *Sir Eustace Grey*, *The Birth of Flattery*, and other minor pieces; and its success, writes the poet's son and biographer, 'was not only decided, but nearly unprecedented'. This was in no small measure due to Jeffrey's generous tribute in the *Edinburgh*, the whole of the first edition being sold off within two days of the appearance of that review. *The Borough* also came from Hatchard's, but with his last volume and the collected edition of his works Crabbe, as we have seen, made the greatest bargain of his life with John Murray II. To-day Hatchard's continue their career at 187 Piccadilly in association with the various branches of F. & E. Stoneham, Burnside, and a group of other bookshops in London and the provinces.

Another literary landmark in Piccadilly which has shifted its site during the present century is that of the west-end house of Henry Sotheran and Co., who moved from No. 43 to their roomier quarters in Sackville Street, a stone's throw away, in 1936. Thomas Sotheran, the founder, belonged to an old family of booksellers in York, but, after serving his apprenticeship there, left for the larger scope of London, serving for a time with the Quaker booksellers of Cornhill, John and Arthur Arch. Here also was apprenticed William Pickering, who subsequently combined antiquarian bookselling with publishing, and adopted the familiar device of the Aldine Press—an anchor and dolphin entwined—which at a later date became the trade mark of the Chiswick Press. Pickering's 'Diamond Classics', with which he scored his first success soon after starting for himself in Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1820—removing four years later to Chancery Lane—were so called from the 'diamond' type in which they were printed: 'the smallest edition of the classics ever published', in the words of the publisher's own advertisement. His beautifully printed Aldine edition of the poets, with which he earned a worthier title to fame, ran to fifty-three volumes. In 1842 Pickering followed Sotheran to Piccadilly, where, at No. 177, he remained till his death.

Thomas Sotheran, to return to our earlier reference to John and Arthur Arch, left the Quaker booksellers some eight years earlier than Pickering, launching out on his own account in 1812. It was not, however, until he was joined in partnership by his son Henry that the firm assumed its prominent position in the trade. In 1856 a new partner was found in George Willis, whose valuable stock increased their total number of books to about half a million, with a catalogue running to over six hundred pages. On its publishing side the firm has been chiefly interested in works on antiquarian subjects and art, as well as natural history, their most important venture being in connexion with the ornithological and other books of John Gould, which were taken over in 1881. Henry Sotheran, who retired in 1893, died twelve years later. At one time the firm had several branch shops in London, but gradually concentrated in its West End headquarters.

The Tower Street branch, after being transferred to Queen Street, Cheapside, made its name there under the partnership of Jones & Evans. Both partners are now dead, but Frederick Evans will long be remembered for his varied achievements. He made his shop a

book-lovers' haunt in the very heart of the city—an oasis in the desert. He had the knack of kindling enthusiasm in the most unlikely breasts. Bernard Shaw once bore witness to this in the tribute which he paid to Evans's equally rare gifts as a photographer—an art to which he devoted himself in his retirement. While in Queen Street he was Shaw's 'ideal bookseller'. The author became interested in the shop, he explained, 'because there was a book of mine [*The Quintessence of Ibsenism*] which apparently no Englishman wanted, or could ever possibly come to want, without being hypnotized; and yet it used to keep selling in an unaccountable way. The explanation was that Evans liked it. And he stood no nonsense from his customers. He told them what was good for them, not what they asked for.'

It was Frederick Evans, too, who 'discovered' Aubrey Beardsley, then a young city clerk. Like many another man who subsequently made his mark in art or letters, Beardsley used to haunt that friendly bookshop. Evans introduced him to J. M. Dent when the artist was barely nineteen. The introduction led to Dent's illustrated edition of Malory, as mentioned on p. 296, and the Beardsley vogue. In later days the ruling spirit of Jones & Evans was J. G. Wilson, now managing director of 'Bumpus's' in Oxford Street, and one of the outstanding booksellers of the day. He received a C.B.E. in the Birthday Honours List, 1948.

Before he came to London, Wilson had some twenty years of sound bookselling training in Scotland, where the antiquarian and modern sides are still combined on the traditional lines imported from the Continent in the days when it was easier to cross to the Low Countries than to travel by road to London. His own efforts to improve the status and increase the educational equipment of the young bookseller of to-day are well known throughout the trade. The dream of many a book-lover was realised for some years in Bumpus's extensions down Marylebone Lane, in the Old Watch House, with its memories of Jack Sheppard, Dick Turpin, and other rogues of bygone Tyburnia, as well as its more appropriate associations with the House of Harley—the coat-of-arms of the vanished Earls of Oxford still surmounting one of its eighteenth-century doorways. Here Wilson created a modern Temple of the Muses which would have filled the founder of the firm with legitimate pride. That worthy was John Bumpus, who set up as a bookseller-publisher in Clerkenwell about 1790. When he moved to Holborn

Bars his shop was handy for the Hampstead coach, which started from the neighbouring 'Blue Posts', Mrs. Bumpus's hospitable back parlour becoming a familiar haunt for students and book-lovers before taking their seats. Thomas Bumpus, the next in succession, was on friendly terms with many of the great literary figures of Victorian days, Dickens in particular being indebted to him for a good deal of advice about his copyrights and the like. The Oxford Street business, now known as John and Edward Bumpus Ltd., was started in his lifetime by his son John. Though forced by rebuilding necessities to abandon the Old Watch House and the New Court House, and remove to its present quarters on the opposite side, it remains one of the finest book-shops in the world.

Moxon's business in Dover Street survived its founder's death by a considerable number of years, but its best days were over. The chief interest attaching to its last phase, when Bertrand Payne was in control, was its chequered association with Swinburne, beginning with his first book, containing the two plays, *The Queen Mother* and *Rosamund*. That volume was to have been issued in 1860 by Basil M. Pickering, of Piccadilly, William Pickering's son and successor. Before the first twenty copies had been circulated the book, for some mysterious reason which has never transpired, was withdrawn on the very eve of publication and transferred to Moxon's, who gave it a new title-page. 'Of all still-born books', Swinburne confided to his future biographer, Sir Edmund Gosse, '*The Queen Mother* was the stillest.' Not a copy was sold until long afterwards. Five years later came *Atalanta in Calydon*, with which Swinburne, in Gosse's phrase, 'shot like a rocket into celebrity'.

Here again Moxon's were the publishers, as in the case of *Chastelard*, which followed in the same year. Then came the first series of *Poems and Ballads*, with the 'libidinous songs' which caused such a storm of censure in 1866. Lord Houghton, without the poet's knowledge, had offered this collection to the third John Murray, who refused them, says Gosse, 'in terms which stung the poet to fury.' Moxon's decided to risk it, but the storm proved so violent, and threats of prosecution became so ominous, that the publishers only breathed freely again when they had washed their hands entirely of the offending book. The result was that Swinburne transferred all his works to John Camden Hotten, 'that somewhat notorious tradesman', in Edmund Gosse's phrase, being now the

only one who would run the risk of publishing his books.¹ The new alliance, however, was far from satisfactory, ugly disputes occurring regarding the number of copies printed and sold, and the like; and it was a happy release for Swinburne when Hotten died in 1873, three years after all personal relations had ceased between them. Hotten's business was taken over at once by Chatto and Windus, who remained Swinburne's publishers till the end of his life. Andrew Chatto, one of the partners, had been one of Hotten's assistants. His colleague, W. E. Windus, was a familiar figure in the art world. A year or so later the business was expanded by the purchase of some of Bohn's stock. A new partner was also found in Percy Spalding—son of Henry Benjamin Spalding, of Spalding and Hodge—who succeeded in due course as head of the firm and guided it to the front rank of English publishing houses.

Songs before Sunrise in the meantime had found another publisher in F. S. Ellis (1871), but this book subsequently made its way, with the rest of Swinburne's works, to Chatto and Windus. F. S. Ellis was a great friend of the Pre-Raphaelites, and, as Edmund Gosse testifies, 'a man of the highest integrity'. Swinburne would have transferred his earlier books to him in Hotten's lifetime, but Hotten refused to surrender them and tried in vain to prevent Ellis from publishing *Songs before Sunrise*. F. S. Ellis, who died in 1901, was head of the house at 29 New Bond Street, which remained a bookshop for upwards of two hundred years. John Brindley started there in 1728, to become joint publisher, seven years later (as mentioned on p. 164) of the first book to be issued by Robert Dodsley in Pall Mall, and the second volume of Pope's Works. The two-hundredth anniversary was commemorated in 1928 by the publication of the history of *The Oldest London Bookshop*, by George Smith and Frank Benger.²

If the great Victorian poets had long to wait before receiving their

¹ Hotten also introduced many of the best-known works of American authors, among them Lowell's *Biglow Papers*, Leland's *Hans Breitmann's Barty and other Ballads*, Oliver Wendell Holmes's *Wit and Humour*, Artemus Ward, his *Book*, and some of Bret Harte's tales. He was himself a busy compiler, under various names, and also published several of his own translations of Erckmann-Chatrian's works.

² George Smith, whose connexion with bookselling goes back sixty years to 1887, when he was articled by F. S. Ellis's nephew, Gilbert Ifold Ellis. Gilbert Ellis died in 1902 and was succeeded by George Smith and James J. Holdsworth, who had been associated with the firm since 1887. Four years after Holdsworth's death in 1933 George Smith removed the stock of books to The Old House, Great Bedwin, Marlborough, where he has continued to issue catalogues under Ellis's name. The old building in New Bond Street was pulled down and the modern one which took its place was no longer a bookseller's.

due reward Dickens proved that dazzling prizes were to be won in fiction in the middle of the nineteenth century. Not many of the myriads of people who hurry along the Strand to-day are aware that the corner of Arundel Street is intimately connected with Dickens's early days. Here, at No. 186, stood the little publishing house which first gave *Pickwick* to the world—a house then recently established by Chapman and Hall, two energetic young men whose names are as closely allied to Dickens and his works as that of John Murray is to Lord Byron. The story of Dickens's first piece of literature to find its way into print—'A Dinner at Poplar Walk, afterwards included in *Sketches by Boz* as *Mr. Minns and his Cousin*—how he dropped it by stealth 'in a dark letter-box in a dark office up a dark court in Fleet Street', and almost wept with pride when it appeared in all the glory of type, is one of the familiar anecdotes of literary history. That was in 1833, in Dickens's reporting days, and the man who sold him the momentous number of the magazine was none other than William Hall, one of his future publishers.

How firmly the incident was stamped on his memory is shown in the fact that when William Hall called at his chambers in Furnival's Inn some two years afterwards, with the proposal which was to lead to the immortal 'Pickwick', he recognised the bookseller at once, though he had never seen him either before or since. Young Hall—or 'little Hall', as he was more intimately called—was the junior partner in the publishing firm established with Edward Chapman in 1830. As publishers they began with a number of enterprises which John Forster describes as inglorious rather than important, including a library of fiction, which had for its editor the wayward genius, Charles Whitehead. Whitehead, himself an *Old Monthly* man, was a great admirer of Dickens's contributions to that journal, collected with similar articles from the *Chronicle*, and published early in 1836 as *Sketches by Boz*—and had secured from him for his own series, *The Tugs at Ramsgate*.

In November 1835, Chapman and Hall published *The Squib Annual*, with plates by Robert Seymour, and anxious to follow this up with a similar series of Cockney sporting pictures in shilling numbers had asked Whitehead to write the letterpress. Whitehead, records his biographer, Mackenzie Bell, declined the commission on the ground that he was not equal to the task of producing the copy with sufficient regularity, and it was on his recommendation that Dickens was chosen in his stead. Hence the famous interview at

Furnival's Inn, resulting, as everyone knows, in Dickens's acceptance on the understanding that he should have a free hand in the choice of subjects and characters, and that the sketches should illustrate the text—not, as suggested by the publishers, that the text should merely be a running commentary on the pictures. Dickens was only twenty-four when the first part appeared in April 1836. He considered himself on the high road to fortune with the addition to his journalistic income of the £14 which the publishers had agreed to pay for each monthly instalment. 'The work will be no joke', he wrote to 'My dearest Kate', 'but the emolument is too tempting to resist'; and on the strength of it he celebrated the appearance of Part I by getting married.

But *Pickwick* was not at first the great success which its author and publishers had hoped. All sorts of unexpected difficulties cropped up. Seymour died by his own hand before the second number appeared, and it was some time before his place was filled by the fortunate choice of Hablot K. Browne ('Phiz'). Forster tells us that it was not until the fourth and fifth numbers (Sam Weller makes his first appearance in the fifth) that *Pickwick's* importance began to be understood by the trade. From that time, however, all doubt was removed, and the publishers, whose chief difficulty now was to cope with the demand, were so satisfied with their bargain that eventually they paid the author a considerable sum over and above the terms agreed upon.

Literary success rarely comes without its attendant worries. Dickens soon found himself in the toils of rival publishers. 'He would have laughed', writes Forster, 'if, at the outset of his wonderful fortune in literature, his genius acknowledged by all without misgiving, young, popular, and prosperous, anyone had compared him to the luckless men of letters of former days, whose common fate was to be sold into a slavery which their later lives were passed in vain endeavours to escape from. Not so was his fate to be; yet something of it he was doomed to experience. He had unwittingly sold himself into a quasi-bondage, and had to purchase his liberty at a heavy cost, after considerable suffering.' The difficulties, it must be confessed, were largely of his own making. Full of hope and enthusiasm, he had eagerly snatched at the tempting baits offered by Richard Bentley, the enterprising publisher of New Burlington Street, who, quick to grasp the potential value of the rising star, had engaged him as editor of a new monthly magazine—

Bentley's Miscellany—for which Dickens was also to write his next work, *Oliver Twist*; and, not long afterwards, secured him still further with an agreement by which Bentley should also publish his third and fourth books.

The result was that the novelist, while finishing the last half of *Pickwick* for Chapman and Hall, had to turn out similar monthly instalments of *Oliver Twist* for Bentley, edit and write occasional papers for the new magazine, prepare *Barnaby Rudge*, which he had engaged to supply in a complete form at an early date, and, in addition, edit the Memoirs of Grimaldi for the same publisher. Truly an amazing programme, even for that astonishing young genius. No wonder, as the time approached for beginning *Nicholas Nickleby*, which Dickens had undertaken to write for Chapman and Hall as a successor to *Pickwick*, that he complained of a sense of 'something hanging over him like a hideous nightmare'.

It would take too long to tell how he at length succeeded in escaping from the net in which he had been too ready to become entangled. Much negotiating and not ungenerous concessions by Bentley led to the novelist's retirement from the editorial drudgery of the *Miscellany* and his recapture by Chapman and Hall, who advanced the £2500 which enabled Dickens to purchase from Bentley the copyright and stock of *Oliver Twist*, and cancel his engagements with that publisher not only for *Barnaby Rudge*, but for the third tale which he had agreed to write for him. Chapman and Hall still further strengthened their hold upon Dickens by helping him out of his entanglements with Macrone, the young publisher friend to whom the novelist had sold the copyright of *Sketches by Boz* for a conditional payment which Forster puts at £150—though Percy Fitzgerald estimates it, all told, at £350—and who threatened to re-issue the work in monthly parts as soon as the author made his great name with the serial publication of *Pickwick* and *Oliver Twist*. Chapman and Hall shared with Dickens the £2000 which Macrone demanded as a sort of unearned increment before he could be bought out.

Some years later (in 1844), it was the turn of Chapman and Hall to be bought out by Bradbury and Evans. There had been a strange falling off in the sales of *Martin Chuzzlewit*—probably due, to a certain extent, to the author's recent absence in America—and an indiscreet suggestion by Hall, whose premature fears made him speak too openly of safeguarding the interests of the firm, so wounded

the sensitive Dickens that he lent a ready ear to the advances of Bradbury and Evans. Further disappointment with his profits from the enormous sales of the *Christmas Carol*, published but a few days before the following Christmas, settled the matter. On 1st June 1844 he signed an agreement with Bradbury and Evans by which, upon advance made to him of £2800, he assigned to them a fourth share in whatever he might write during the ensuing eight years, though no obligations were imposed as to what works, if any, should be written, except that a successor to the *Carol* should be ready for the Christmas of 1844.

Dickens remained with Bradbury and Evans until 1859, when a bitter personal dispute with them sent him back to the publishers associated with his first success. It is sad to think that the younger partner, William Hall—the man who had sold him the historic copy of the *Old Monthly*—should have died during this long business estrangement. His funeral in the spring of 1847 was attended by Dickens, whose personal regard for the publisher had survived the temporary cloud, leaving remembrance only of much kindly intercourse. From 1859 all his copyrights were reserved for Chapman and Hall, and there was never any further question of a separation.

Edward Chapman retired in 1864—by which time the business had been removed from 186 Strand to 193 Piccadilly—and was succeeded as head of the firm by his cousin Frederic Chapman, who had joined the staff in 1841, and taken William Hall's place on the death of the junior partner six years later. Frederic Chapman became the moving spirit in a vigorous and far-seeing policy, which vastly improved the firm's position. 'An excellent fellow he was', writes Percy Fitzgerald, 'somewhat blunt and bluff, but straightforward and good-natured. He had a small but delightful house in Ovington Square, to which someone had added a billiard-room, which he turned into a charming dining-room. What tasty Lucullus-like dinners were given there! I cannot say how he managed the firm, but when Dickens was alive he tried to meet his wishes in every conceivable way. Forster, too, he looked up to almost reverently. . . . I recall my first visit to the firm in Piccadilly. John Forster was with me, who strode in all important, "as though the whole place belonged to him." I was struck with the general stately look—the bustle—the number of clerks hurrying about. Forster was received with infinite respect, for he dictated all things.'

Dickens's biographer continued as literary adviser to Chapman and Hall until 1860, when he was succeeded by George Meredith, then only thirty-two.

In 1858 Anthony Trollope, after publishing *The Barchester Towers* and other early novels with Longmans; *The Three Clerks* with Richard Bentley; and some discouraging experiments elsewhere, settled down, like Dickens, with Chapman and Hall. He soon became intimately associated with the fortunes of the firm. *Framley Parsonage*, which made its first appearance in Smith and Elder's recently established *Cornhill* about this time, suddenly raised him to the rank of a 'best-seller', but did not shake his new allegiance. He dictated his own terms long before he became—for a brief period—one of Chapman and Hall's directors. In his history of the house, *A Hundred Years of Publishing*, Arthur Waugh, for many years its managing director, gives us a vivid sketch of the 'rough, emphatic, clamorous figure who become a terror to the staff'. Trollope, like Frederic Chapman, was one of the founders of the *Fortnightly Review*: chairman, indeed, of the separate company which brought it into being. The founders lost heart in their offspring too soon. In eighteen months they sold it to Chapman and Hall, who had published it from the start, and under whom it gradually became an enviable success. The first editor was George H. Lewes, who was succeeded by Lord Morley—then, of course, plain John Morley—in 1867 when the fortnightly publication became a monthly event. Lord Morley's memorable editorship—broken only by his absence in America, during which his place was filled by George Meredith—lasted until 1883, when he was succeeded in turn by T. H. S. Escott, Frank Harris, and W. L. Courtney, the last of whom maintained the best traditions of the *Fortnightly* for thirty odd years.

In 1880 Frederic Chapman turned the business into a limited company, and not long afterwards bought for it the copyright of the works of Carlyle, whose death occurred in 1881. They had been Carlyle's publishers for many years—ever since they had brought out *Past and Present* for him in 1843. Six years later, *Sartor Resartus* came into their list—a book which, after being offered and declined in succession by Murray, Longmans, Colburn and Bentley, had to wait until 1838, when the author had firmly established his fame with his *French Revolution*, before any firm would venture to publish it. Carlyle's later books were all issued by Chapman and Hall. A month after his death the publishers moved to Henrietta Street,

Covent Garden, where they remained until after their alliance in 1939 with Methuen's, whom they joined in Essex Street, Strand.

George Meredith's association with Chapman and Hall began with the publication by them of *The Shaving of Shagpat*, and after succeeding Forster as literary adviser in 1860, he was for over thirty years a ruling personality of the firm. An article in the *Fortnightly* on 'George Meredith as Publisher's Reader', written by B. W. Matz, shows not only how ready was Meredith always to help and encourage an author whenever a manuscript pleased him, but also how extremely high was his standard of merit. 'To say he was difficult to please is to understate the fact. His standard was tremendously high, and from that pinnacle his judgment was right and sound. But some doubt may be expressed as to whether the standard was the right one to judge a book for commercial purposes.' His rejection of *East Lynne*—one of Bentley's greatest successes—is perhaps the strongest case in point, though to the other side of his account must be placed such discoveries as Olive Schreiner's *Story of an African Farm*. His own novels, with three or four exceptions, were all issued by the same house until 1895, when they were transferred to Constable's.

The story of Thackeray's publishers, which follows naturally on that of Dickens's, recalls the history of another celebrated house—now merged in John Murray's. It was under the second John Murray that the founder of Smith and Elder, as the firm was originally called, served part of his apprenticeship. Like the first John Murray, and many another publisher whose name has become a household word—Blackwood, Macmillan, Blackie, Black, Nelson, Chambers, and the rest—George Smith was born on the other side of the Tweed. The son of a Morayshire farmer, he was twenty-seven when, in 1816, he launched out as a London bookseller and stationer in partnership with a brother Scot, Alexander Elder.

Three years later the partners embarked in a modest way as publishers, and in 1824 moved to 65 Cornhill, adding to the firm a third member, who brought a business connexion with India which for a considerable time played a larger share than the publishing department in the flourishing affairs of the firm. Those were still the days of the old East India Company, and the fortunes of the Cornhill house were built up mainly on its export trade to India and the Colonies. Officers of the East India Company not only ordered their books and stationery and other things through Smith,

Elder, and Company, but gradually came to use them as general agents and bankers. It was a profitable but curious assortment of enterprises. The firm played a part, for instance, in Lieutenant Waghorn's successful efforts to establish the overland route to India; they shipped the first electrical plant to the same part of the world; they would be hard at work at one time fitting out a crack corps of Horse for a little frontier campaign, and at another packing a post-chaise with the latest number of the *Quarterly* or *Edinburgh Review* to catch a fast East Indiaman off Deal.

All this, or much of it at least, is little more than the introduction to the history of the house on its literary side. The first chapter really begins with the entry into the business of the second George Smith, towards the end of the 'thirties. Hitherto the publishing output, though considerable in bulk, and not undistinguished in some of its items, had languished for lack of a steady policy and proper organisation. George Smith was barely twenty when, at his own request, he took over this department in 1843, and had the modest sum of £1500 placed at his absolute disposal to see what he could do to improve matters. His first venture was Horne's *New Spirit of the Age*, the series of essays in which Mrs. Browning and Robert Bell both had a hand. Then in 1846 came a book which, as the publisher afterwards related in some reminiscences in the *Cornhill Magazine*, brought him in touch with Leigh Hunt in rather a strange way:

I went to Peckham to dine with Thomas Powell, who, as well as being a confidential clerk in the counting-house of two brothers who were wealthy merchants in the City, dabbled in literature. The merchants were supposed to have suggested to Charles Dickens the Cheeryble Brothers, in *Nicholas Nickleby*. Powell afterwards went to the United States and contributed articles of a very personal character to the New York newspapers about English men of letters. While I waited in Powell's little drawing-room for a few minutes before dinner, I took up a neatly written manuscript which was lying on the table, and was reading it when my host entered the room. 'Ah', he said, 'that doesn't look worth £40, does it? I advanced £40 to Leigh Hunt on the security of that manuscript, and I shall never see my money again.' When I was leaving I asked Powell to let me take the manuscript with me. I finished reading it before I went to sleep

that night, and next day I asked Powell if he would let me have the manuscript if I paid him the £40. He readily assented, and having got from him Leigh Hunt's address, I went off to him in Edwardes Square, Kensington, explained the circumstances under which the manuscript had come into my possession, and asked whether, if I paid him an additional £60, I might have the copy-right. 'You young prince'! cried Leigh Hunt, in a tone of something like rapture, and the transaction was promptly concluded. The work was *Imagination and Fancy*. It was succeeded by *Wit and Humour*, and other books, all of which were successful, and the introduction was the foundation of a friendship with Leigh Hunt and the members of his family which was very delightful to me.

There is a letter in Ruskin's correspondence which shows that George Smith sent a copy of *Wit and Humour* to the then unknown author of *Modern Painters*, the first volume of which had been published anonymously, and with disappointing results, by Smith, Elder, and Company. 'I ought before to have thanked you', writes Ruskin, 'for your obliging present of *Wit and Humour*—two characters of intellect in which I am so immensely deficient as never even to have ventured upon a conjecture respecting their real nature.' Ruskin's business relations with the firm lasted for thirty years, and led to a close personal friendship with George Smith himself. It was about this time—in 1846—that the first George Smith died, and the other partners withdrawing not long afterwards, the founder's son, still only twenty-two, found himself sole head of the firm. Young Smith faced the crisis with characteristic courage, and proved himself equal to the task. By force of character, and a rare combination of business acumen and literary instinct, he made a great success of each department.

In 1853 he took into partnership Henry S. King, the Brighton bookseller, whose business was taken over by Messrs. Treacher. By 1868 both sides of the house had developed in so many directions that Smith decided to devote himself entirely to the publishing branch, relinquishing the other department to the firm which became H. S. King and Company, bankers and East India and Colonial agents. George Smith moved to Waterloo Place in 1869. Long before this separation, he had made a circle of literary friends. His happy association with Charlotte Brontë began in 1847, when the manuscript of *The Professor* arrived at the office from an

unknown writer, who gave the signature of *Currer Bell*. The story of how the manuscript was declined with a letter which, as the novelist afterwards said, was 'so delicate, reasonable, and courteous, as to be more cheering than some acceptances': how, on this encouragement, she sent Smith the manuscript of *Jane Eyre*; how the mysterious author subsequently came to London with her sister and revealed her identity in the publisher's office; and how the rare friendship which resulted stood firm until Charlotte Brontë's premature death brought her to the last of those black milestones which marked her troubled life—will always remain one of the brightest chapters in the history of publishing. Charlotte Brontë praised her publisher in the most graceful way by making George Smith the original of her Dr. John in *Villette*. It was through Smith that Charlotte Brontë came to know Thackeray and George Henry Lewes, and she was able to return the compliment by introducing her publisher to her friends, Harriet Martineau and Mrs. Gaskell, whose works, as a consequence, soon found their way to the same generous hands.

Thackeray's connexion with the house was closer even than that of Charlotte Brontë. It began with the introduction to him which Smith obtained on Charlotte's behalf. At the close of her visit to London in 1850, Thackeray asked him to publish his next Christmas book, *The Kickleburys on the Rhine*. This the publisher did, and in the following year cemented the connexion by paying him £1200 for the first edition of 2500 copies of *Esmond*. As in his dealings with other authors, Smith's business relations with the novelist ripened into something equally close and lasting on the social side. The intimacy led to the *Cornhill Magazine*, which was originally planned merely as a medium for the serial publication of a novel by Thackeray, though it had long been one of Smith's ambitions to establish a great periodical.

The *Cornhill*—so named by Thackeray after its original publishing address—made its first appearance in January 1860, with Thackeray as its editor at a salary of £1000 a year. The magazine not only proved an unprecedented success in itself—Smith thereupon doubling Thackeray's salary—but proved a means of bringing to the publishing house many of the illustrious writers and books with which the firm subsequently became identified—the Brownings, George Eliot, for whose *Romola* in its serial and book rights the publisher offered £10,000; Anthony Trollope, John Addington

Symonds, Matthew Arnold, whose niece, Mrs. Humphry Ward, like Thackeray's daughter, Lady Ritchie, carried down to the twentieth century the old association with the same publishers, and a host of others—and artistic celebrities, too, for the *Cornhill* in those days was illustrated.

Ever ready for fresh conquests, the publisher some five years later ventured into the thorny paths of evening journalism. With the help of Frederick Greenwood, who became its first editor, he established the *Pall Mall Gazette*, so named after the journal invented by Thackeray for the benefit of Arthur Pendennis. The story of the *P.M.G.*, with its brilliant band of contributors, and of Smith's gallant struggle to place it firmly on its feet, would take up much more space than we can spare. We need only add that in 1880, having succeeded in his costly struggle, he handed the paper over to Henry Yates Thompson, who had just married his eldest daughter. The story of his own subsequent career belongs to a later chapter.

His old partner, Henry S. King, it should be added, continued the publishing department at Cornhill for a time under his own name. Tennyson, for whom he published in the 'seventies, had the highest opinion of him. 'With none of the publishers into whose hands circumstances had thrown my father', wrote Tennyson's son in his Memoir of the poet, 'was the connexion so interruptedly pleasant as with Messrs. Macmillan—unless perhaps that with Mr. Henry King.' Before the end of the 'seventies, Henry King and Company disposed of their publishing branch to C. Kegan Paul, one of their partners and readers. That was the beginning of Kegan Paul and Company, a firm which added Trübner to its name after the death of Nicholas Trübner in 1884, the business of Trübner and Company being amalgamated with Kegan Paul's under the unhappy auspices of the Hansard Union. Associated with Kegan Paul in the conduct of the new company was a son of Archbishop Trench: hence its full style of Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, and Company. Kegan Paul had himself been in the Church before taking to publishing—Vicar of Sturminster from 1862 to 1874, after nine years as a master at Eton. He retired from the firm in 1899, some three years before his death. 'Publishing', he recorded in his *Memories*, 'is not by any means the royal road to wealth that many people think it.' Himself a writer with a sensitive feeling for style, he set a high standard on the literary quality of everything he

issued, but came to the conclusion that a literary man was not, as a rule, a successful publisher.¹

The house of Macmillan, just mentioned in Lord Tennyson's tribute, first made its mark in London, like Smith, Elder, and Company, in mid-Victorian days. Its history began in the earlier years of Queen Victoria's reign, after its founder, Daniel Macmillan, had mastered his craft in Scotland, first in the town of Irvine, on the Ayrshire coast, and afterwards in Glasgow. His apprenticeship over, Daniel found it impossible to settle down in Scotland. He sought an outlet for his zeal in London, like so many other young Scotsmen, including his friend MacLehose, who afterwards established the well-known business of MacLehose and Sons, publishers to the University of Glasgow, as well as general publishers on their own account. It was to MacLehose, after his first experience of London life at Seeley's, in Fleet Street, that he explained his lofty ideal of what a bookseller's calling should be:

Bless your heart, MacLehose, you surely never thought that you were merely working for bread! Don't you know that you are cultivating good taste among the natives of Glasgow; helping to unfold a love of the beautiful among those who are slaves to the useful, or what they call the useful? . . . We booksellers, if we are faithful to our task, are trying to destroy, and are helping to destroy, all kinds of confusion, and are aiding our great Taskmaster to reduce the world into order and beauty and harmony. . . . At the same time, it is our duty to manage our affairs wisely, keep our minds easy, and not trade beyond our means.

Words which should be printed in letters of gold in every bookseller's diary. When he wrote this letter Daniel was himself a bookseller's assistant, earning £80 a year. He had ventured to London in 1833, but finding nothing suitable there had accepted a post at Cambridge, beginning at £30 a year, and boarding with his master, Mr. Johnson. London, however, still held out greater attractions for him, and the spring of Queen Victoria's accession-year found him in his situation at Seeley's, who then had their publishing address in Fleet Street. Here his salary rose in six years from £60 to £130, his younger brother Alexander meantime joining

¹ Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, and Company are now merged in Routledge and Son at Broadway House. (See p. 333.)

him in the same house. Always fretting for independence, Daniel at length embarked with his brother in a small bookseller's shop in Aldersgate Street. This venture led, in the autumn of 1843, to the purchase of a more promising business in Trinity Street, Cambridge—'just opposite the Senate House'.

That was the turning-point in the career of the two Macmillans, largely brought about through the influence and material help of Archdeacon Hare, one of the authors of *Guesses at Truth by Two Brothers*—a book which made so deep an impression on Daniel Macmillan while he was still a shopman at Seeley's, that he wrote a letter to the anonymous writers expressing his keen appreciation of the work. The letter pleased the Archdeacon, and presently young Macmillan received an invitation to visit him at Hurstmonceaux. The result was a lasting friendship which led to Macmillan's introduction to F. D. Maurice, Charles Kingsley, Dean Stanley, and other men who not only influenced his private life, but helped by their books to build up the publishing business. It was the Archdeacon and his brother who lent the Macmillans the £500 which enabled them to buy the business in Cambridge. Here Daniel was at once on the best of terms with the undergraduates and other university men, and, though handicapped by dreadful illnesses, the affairs of the firm prospered exceedingly. It was not long before the brothers were able to take over the business of Stevenson, the ablest of the older Cambridge booksellers, and to think seriously of the possibilities of running a successful publishing branch in conjunction with the bookselling department. 'Our retail trade', wrote Daniel to MacLehose in 1855, 'will chiefly be valuable as bringing about us men who will grow into authors. Most of the able young men in the University are our customers, and many of them most kind friends.' The scheme worked splendidly. With books by F. D. Maurice, Richard Chenevix Trench and Edward White Benson, two future archbishops, Lord Kelvin—then known only as W. Thomson, B.A.—John William Colenso, the future Bishop of Natal, Charles J. Vaughan, Dr. Llewellyn Davies, and Isaac Todhunter and Barnard Smith, whose names are known in most schoolrooms in England, a business was developed which justified the saying that it was 'founded on Broad Church theology and Cambridge mathematics'. In the more venturesome field of fiction the Macmillans were equally fortunate in publishing for Charles Kingsley, whose *Westward Ho!* shared with Thomas

Hughes's *Tom Brown's Schooldays* the chief honours of those early days.

Meantime Daniel Macmillan had married Miss Orridge, of Cambridge, and the author of *Tom Brown's Schooldays* gives a charming glimpse of the happy but all too brief domestic life which followed. Less than seven years later Daniel Macmillan died, but he had the satisfaction of leaving a flourishing business in the able hands of his brother Alexander, and knowing that, whatever happened, he had provided for his wife and children. To the last, his biographer tells us, he retained 'a joyousness and playfulness in his intercourse with his family and friends which made it impossible to realise upon how frail a thread his life hung.' The next phase in the fortunes of the house begins with the establishing of a branch in London, and will be discussed later.

While London had become more than ever the centre of the book-publishing trade in Britain, and the old co-operation between the booksellers of Edinburgh and the metropolis no more than a memory long before the death of Daniel Macmillan, some of the leading firms still retained their headquarters in Scotland. Besides the Blacks and Blackwoods, there were, among others, the two vigorous firms of Nelson and Sons, founded by Thomas Nelson as far back as 1798, and the Chambers, established by William and Robert Chambers in 1832 with the success of their familiar journal: both concerns flourishing to this day with their popular libraries of reprints, gift-books, encyclopædias, dictionaries, and other works of the kind. When Adam Black laid the modest foundations of his firm in 1807—four years after William Blackwood had started business on his own account—Scott, by his partnership with the Ballantynes, had already taken the luckless step that was to lead to his undoing. It was the younger of these new publishing firms which was destined ultimately—years after Scott's death—to become possessed of some of the most valuable copyrights that ever found their way to the open market.

Like Daniel Macmillan in later years, Adam Black sought the greater possibilities of London after serving his time in Scotland. He described his apprenticeship in John Fairbairn's shop in Edinburgh as 'a dreary disgusting servitude, in which I wasted five of the best years of my life with associates from whom I learned much evil and little good.' He had little money to spare when he started to look for work in London. He was almost at the end of his re-

sources when he earned his first half-guinea from Thomas Sheraton, now honoured as an old master in the history of English furniture, then regarded only as a worn-out cabinet-maker and encyclopædist, living in an obscure street, in a shop which was half a dwelling-house, and a dirty one at that.

After little more than a week with Sheraton—almost ashamed to take his half-guinea from the poor man—Black secured a more lucrative post at the 'Temple of the Muses', Lackington's immense book-shop at the corner of Finsbury Square, which in those days, with its quarter of a million volumes constantly on sale, was one of the sights of London. Here young Black remained until the time arrived to start in business for himself. For this he returned to his native Edinburgh, and, in his twenty-fourth year, opened his unpretentious shop at North Bridge. His pronounced Whiggism and independence in religion—though he was always a man of the sincerest piety—might have affected his prospects in Edinburgh in the early years of the nineteenth century, but he was wise enough not to meddle openly in politics for at least ten years, by which time the foundations of his business were well and truly laid.

Meanwhile, for a few years, he had been associated with an old shopmate, Thomas Underwood, in a small London book-shop which they had bought up between them. This presently led to their purchase of the Fleet Street business of the second John Murray on his removal to Albemarle Street. Adam Black was forced into this deal rather against his own judgment, and had to fall back on his father for financial support, as well as on his brother Charles, whom he persuaded to leave the building trade and take an active share in the bookselling business. Having put £1000 into the concern, Charles Black proceeded to London, and John Murray's old place in Fleet Street was taken over by the new firm of Underwood and Black. Only for a short time, however, for Underwood proved an impossible partner to work with. In 1813 both brothers were glad enough to sell out.

All this time Adam Black's Edinburgh business had been developing on sound if unsensational lines. He was gradually expanding the publishing as well as the bookselling side. When the crash came in 1826, involving the fall of Constable and Ballantyne, and overwhelming poor Scott himself, he was ready to jump to the front by acquiring the copyright of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, which had been the property of Constable since 1812. The actual purchase

was concluded in 1827, when Adam Black succeeded in completing the necessary capital for this ambitious undertaking by securing three fresh partners, whose shares, however, were all bought in by Black within the next ten years, so that by 1837 the *Encyclopædia* became his sole property. Heedless or unconscious of impending disaster, Constable before his bankruptcy had made all arrangements for a new edition (the seventh) of the *Encyclopædia*, under the editorship of Macvey Napier, who was to receive for his services a total salary of £6500, to be paid by instalments on the publication of each half-volume. This plan was carried out by Adam Black and his partners in all its details, Dr. James Browne being also engaged as sub-editor, by whom, indeed, the bulk of the editorial work was done.

The next landmark in the publishing career of Adam Black was the purchase from Robert Cadell's trustees of the copyright of Scott's Waverley novels and other works for the sum of £31,000.¹ This was in 1851, and in the same year Messrs. Adam and Charles Black—for by that time the founder had taken his nephew Charles into partnership—moved to larger quarters, on the opposite side of North Bridge. No further move was made until the firm shifted its headquarters to London in 1889, taking possession of the fine building which has since been its home in Soho Square. The *Encyclopædia* and the works of Scott, in various new editions, long remained their chief distinction and occupation, though they issued many lesser works of solid and permanent value, and added considerably to their laurels in 1861 by the acquisition of the copyright of De Quincey's works. By this time Adam Black's interests were as deeply absorbed in politics as in publishing. He lived to be twice Lord Provost of Edinburgh, and incidentally to decline the honour of knighthood for his services in that connexion. 'To me', he explained, 'the title would only have been an encumbrance; my wife had no desire to be called 'My lady', and it would only have fostered vanity in my children.'

It was Adam Black who introduced Macaulay to Edinburgh when the electors had to find a successor to Abercromby—elevated to the peerage as Lord Dunfermline in 1839—and when Macaulay himself was made a peer in 1856 it was Black who succeeded him

¹ Robert Cadell, who as stated on p. 225 became Scott's publisher in 1826, and his partner in the re-purchase of the Waverley novels in the following year, lived to make a fortune out of these golden copyrights. His finest edition was the illustrated Abbotsford Series, which cost him some £40,000 to produce.

at Westminster, where he represented his native city until 1865. After his death in 1874—in his ninetieth year—the services of the publisher-politician were recognised by Edinburgh in the erection of a bronze statue, to the memory of 'one of the noblest citizens she ever possessed', in East Princes Street Gardens. In 1870 he retired from the business over which he had ruled for sixty-three years, handing it on to three of his sons, James, Francis, and Adam, who remained as joint partners for many years.

While the first Adam Black was thus building up the fortunes of his firm the slightly senior house of Blackwood was also continuing its flourishing career. Its founder, William Blackwood, was not so long-lived as Adam Black. He died in 1834, a few years after moving his business from Princes Street to 45 George Street, which has since remained the headquarters of the firm. On his death the management passed to two of his sons, Alexander and Robert. The dual reign led to a less eventful but equally prosperous period. The circulation of the magazine rose to 8000 a month; Barham and Bulwer Lytton were enlisted; and a London branch was established in Pall Mall—to be transferred five years later (1845) to the corner house in Paternoster Row, destined to disappear nearly a hundred years later in the London 'Blitz'. It was in 1845 that Alexander Blackwood died, and a more interesting chapter began with the return to Edinburgh of John Blackwood, the founder's third son, to succeed his elder brother in the editorial chair. John had been managing the branch in London, where his friends included Delane and Thackeray, though Thackeray, like Shorthouse in his experience with Smith and Elder, had once enjoyed the distinction of being rejected by the Edinburgh house, and never became one of its authors. In 1849 John was joined by his soldier brother, Major William Blackwood, who helped to a certain extent to bring together what John called his 'Military Staff'—and the military element has always been strongly represented at Blackwood's.

The reign of John Blackwood was also notable for Kinglake's *Crimea*, the long list of novels by Mrs. Oliphant, tales by Charles Reade, Blackmore, Trollope, and many another popular novelist. The crowning glory of all was the association with George Eliot, begun anonymously through George H. Lewes with *Amos Barton*, which started its serial course in *Maga* in January 1857. The mystery surrounding the identity of the author, the part played by Lewes and Blackwood in encouraging her to write, and the firm friendship

with the publisher which sprang therefrom, fill a familiar page in literary history.

Since the eighteenth century days of the Foulis Press, mentioned in an earlier chapter, Glasgow has also maintained its position as one of the three chief centres of book production in Britain, coming only after London and Edinburgh. This is not surprising when we bear in mind that Glasgow, with its ancient university, has been a seat of learning since the Middle Ages, and that the Scots have, in the main, been an educated and reading people from time immemorial.

In mid-Victorian days, round which most of the present chapter is written, the Glasgow houses of Blackie and Collins were steadily building up the businesses which have continued to the present day; while the firm of MacLehose, founded many years before by James and his younger brother Robert MacLehose, were now printers to the University. The oldest of the group are Blackie and Son, who, though their books bear their London imprint, still have their headquarters in Glasgow. The year 1809, in which the business was founded by John Blackie, when he took over the previously existing publishing house of A. & J. Brownlie, was also the year of Corunna, when Glasgow's victorious soldier-son, Sir John Moore, was mortally wounded. One of Blackie's earliest publications was a new edition of the *Travels in Italy* by Dr. John Moore, who, in addition to being a popular author, friend of Smollett, and correspondent of Burns, was the great Sir John's father, a fact which helped the sale of the book considerably.

'Christopher North' was another of Blackie's early authors, contributing his essay on the life and character of Burns to their fine edition of the poet's works, illustrated by D. O. Hill. In 1836 the firm published the complete poems of the Ettrick Shepherd, by arrangement with James Hogg himself. There is still lying in their archives an unpublished drama by Hogg, which, for some reason, was withheld from publication at the time and has ever since reposed peacefully in the safe.

At first the publishers confined their attentions to the literary needs of Scotland, but soon widened their sphere of influence, and by 1830 had their own office in London. A year previously the first John Blackie, a man of rare mental and physical vigour, had taken over the works of Andrew and J. M. Duncan, then printers to the University, and from that time the publishers have done all

their own printing and binding. In due course the founder was joined by his three sons—the second John Blackie (afterwards Lord Provost of Glasgow); Dr. W. G. Blackie (afterwards Lord Dean of Guild of Glasgow), who took the PH.D. degree at Jena, to which his native University of Glasgow subsequently added the honorary degree of LL.D.; and Robert Blackie, all of whom helped their father to develop the business on sound, scholarly lines. On the death of the second John Blackie in 1873, Dr. W. G. Blackie, a man of much learning and of fine taste in literature, became the senior partner of the firm.

The house of Collins dates back to 1820, when it was founded in Glasgow by William Collins in partnership with a brother of the famous divine, Dr. Chalmers. Under the second William, afterwards Sir William Collins, the Glasgow business developed into one of the largest manufacturing stationers and publishers in the world.

One of the 'lettered booksellers' of the Victorian age, George Henry Bohn, retired during this period. His father, John Martin Bohn, was a younger son of a noble Westphalian family, and was at school in Germany with the great Count Metternich. Here young Bohn learnt bookbinding, while Metternich took up shoemaking, in accordance with the old German custom that every German schoolboy, whether the son of a prince or pauper, must learn a trade of some sort. 'Who would have thought you would turn your craft to such businesslike account?' said Metternich to Bohn when he met his old schoolmate in London a good many years later. The truth was, apparently, that Bohn, like many another younger son, had to make his own way in the world, and turned to the readiest means of doing so. Coming to London in 1795, he soon won no little reputation by his bindings, inventing what were termed 'spring backs' and introducing other improvements. Having moved to 17 and 18 Henrietta Street, he also started a second-hand book business, and received the appointment of Court bookseller. Meantime he had married Elizabeth Watt, a niece of James Watt, of steam-engine fame, Henry George Bohn being born early in 1796.

The son was educated at the expense of George III, and entered his father's business when he was sixteen. His German ancestry and linguistic accomplishments stood him in good stead when he travelled through Europe in search of book bargains for the London

business. It was a fortunate period for an ambitious and far-seeing young bookseller. While Napoleon was ravaging the Continent whole libraries were being dispersed by ancient families and religious institutions lest they should fall into the Emperor's hands, and many treasures were picked up in this way by the Anglo-German bookseller. Leipzig was then in its prime as the book mart of the world, and while the guns were booming there in the historic battle of 18th October 1813, an auction sale was taking place in the market, at which young Bohn was practically the only bidder. He happened to be attending another auction sale at Leipzig while the battle of Waterloo was being fought.

Bohn's knowledge of languages was turned to good account in literature as well as in trade, for he published in London, on his own account, before he was eighteen, an English translation from the German of the romance of *Ferrandino*. Serving merely as his father's right hand did not satisfy his ambition, and shortly after his marriage, in 1831, as his father would not admit him into partnership, he started on his own account at 4 York Street, Covent Garden—a house which had already played a part in English literary annals as the home of De Quincey when he wrote *The Confessions of an Opium Eater*.

Bohn's business was founded with £2000, half of which was lent by his father-in-law, William Simpkin, of Simpkin, Marshall, and Company. At first he contented himself mainly with developing a profitable connexion with rare and valuable old books, and gradually built up an excellent reputation among bibliophiles. Ten years after starting for himself he was able to issue a guinea catalogue of his treasures, containing 1948 pages and 23,208 items, together with one hundred and fifty-two pages of 'remainders'. Scenting greater profit in the 'remainder' trade than in rare old books, he devoted himself to this branch of the business with the shrewdness and energy which characterised all his undertakings. He began to buy the copyrights of his remainders as well as the surplus stock, re-issuing at a popular price any book that appeared to be worth the risk.

It was not Bohn, however, who started the cheap libraries of standard reprints, a distinction which belongs to Charles Tilt and his partner and successor David Bogue. Tilt made his name as a successful book and print seller at 86 Fleet Street, where he issued his illustrated classics and 'Miniature Library' of cheap but ele-

gantly printed volumes. On his retirement in 1842 Bogue bought his business and remainders and had already inaugurated his 'European Library' (in 1845), when Bohn came along with a similar series. Unfortunately for Bogue, he had included in one of his reprints (*Roscoe's Life of Lorenzo de' Medici*) a number of illustrations the copyrights of which had previously been bought among his remainders by Bohn. A lawsuit followed which resulted in an injunction against Bogue, and his rival followed up this success by developing his own library so rapidly and skilfully that Bogue at last was forced to retire from the field. Bohn completed his conquest by taking over Bogue's copyrights. The 'European Library' was thus incorporated in Bohn's 'Standard Library', which succeeded so well that it was followed in 1847 by the 'Scientific', the 'Antiquarian', the 'Classical', and other series. Some six hundred volumes altogether—standard works of every country in Europe—were added by Bohn before he retired, after doing 'as much for literature', said Emerson, 'as railroads have done for internal intercourse.' Bohn himself selected most of the volumes, and the list furnishes striking proof of his immense knowledge of European literature. His linguistic accomplishments—he could speak five modern languages, besides being a Greek and Latin scholar—were here of the utmost service to him, and also enabled him to translate several of the volumes included in the series of 'Foreign Classics'. He contributed in various ways to many other additions to his libraries, besides writing for the Philobiblon Society *The Origin and Progress of Printing* (1857) and *A Biography and Bibliography of Shakespeare* (1863). He was also responsible for a *Dictionary of Quotations* (into which he ventured to put several of his own unpublished verses), and a number of other handbooks.

Bohn's knowledge of old books—well displayed in his edition of Lowndes' *Bibliographer's Manual*—brought him in touch with many distinguished men. His advice was often sought by such great collectors as the Duke of Hamilton and 'Vathek' Beckford, and on more than one occasion he was consulted on everyday matters by the Prince Consort. He was chairman of the committee appointed for the Printed Books Department of the 1851 Exhibition. Gladstone, who had a high opinion of Bohn's abilities, offered him a baronetcy, but we are told that the publisher declined the honour on principle. Bohn tired of his success in 1864, when his sons preferred other professions to following in his footsteps, and sold the whole stock and

copyrights of his libraries to Bell and Daldy for about £40,000. His principal copyrights in other departments were taken over by Chatto and Windus for another £20,000, while his second-hand books, which subsequently took forty days to dispose of at various auction rooms, realised a further £13,000. We are not here concerned with the later career of Henry George Bohn; nor with the wonderful collection of art treasures which he accumulated and catalogued in a work that took him, with his daughter, over two years to complete; nor the rose fêtes in the garden of his fine old house at Twickenham, attended by Dickens, Cruikshank, Rosa Bonheur, and many other celebrities. He lived to the ripe old age of eighty-nine, vigorous and industrious to the last.

The advent of Bell and Daldy brings us to the story of the house in which Bohn's Libraries now belonged. The firm itself dated back to 1838, when George Bell, after serving his apprenticeship with Whittaker and Company, booksellers and publishers, of Ave Maria Lane, began business for himself in Bouverie Street. Like H. G. Bohn, George Bell, who was a native of Richmond, Yorkshire, was the son of a bookseller, and a man of scholarly tastes. He started his publishing career with the annotated series entitled *Bibliotheca Classica*, in which his old employers, Messrs. Whittaker, had a share. The series did well from the first, and the publisher followed it up with books of educational, architectural, and religious interest. He was joined in 1855 by F. R. Daldy, from Rivington's, and together they took over many of the joint publications of William Pickering and the Chiswick Press, including the 'Aldine Poets', Pickering himself—to whom reference is made on p. 240—having died in 1854, his last days harassed by financial difficulties through standing security to a friend.

George Bell launched out in other directions by starting a business in Brighton, and becoming proprietor (for some years) of the business of Deighton, Bell, and Company, of Cambridge, whose well-known mathematical connexion helped him to start the 'Cambridge Mathematical' series. The crowning event in the firm's career, however, came with the purchase of Bohn's libraries in 1864. Bell and Daldy had already moved from Bouverie Street to 186 Fleet Street. They had now succeeded Bohn at his York Street address, where they not only extended their own business, but revised and enlarged the libraries which had made their predecessors' fortune.

It was while serving in Bohn's bookshop that Bernard Quaritch saved up the £10—from his salary of twenty-four shillings a week—with which he founded an equally celebrated business. Though Quaritch's funds were low, his aims were high, and his spirits undaunted. When Bohn asked him where he was going he told him frankly that he meant to set up in opposition to his old employer. Bohn laughed. 'Don't you know that I am the first bookseller in England?' he said. 'Yes', came the reply, 'but I am going to be the first bookseller in Europe'—a vow which was in due course fulfilled. Taking out naturalisation papers in 1847—for he was a native of Prussian Saxony—he made his modest beginning in the same year with a little corner shop in Castle Street, Leicester Square. Thirteen years later he was able to move to No. 15 Piccadilly, where he reigned as the prince of antiquarian booksellers until his death in 1900. The centenary of the firm was celebrated in 1947.

No mention of Quaritch is complete without some reference to his share in the adventures of FitzGerald's version of *Omar*. FitzGerald handed over his translation in the first place to Parker of the Strand, who had asked him for something for *Fraser*, but, as he made no use of it for over a year, FitzGerald took it back and published it at his own expense in 1859, through Quaritch, as a slim quarto in brown paper. Everyone knows the story of how Quaritch, finding that no one would pay a shilling each for the 'remainders', of which FitzGerald made him a present, dumped them into the outside box at a penny apiece; and how they were discovered there by Rossetti and his friends. That was before the move to Piccadilly, where Quaritch's house remained one of the literary landmarks of London until its removal to the more sumptuous home, not far away, in Grafton Street.

In the years following Bohn's retirement died two of the nineteenth century pioneers of cheap literature—John Cassell and Charles Knight. Cassell, who was the first to go (in 1865), owed his success to his own untiring energy. He began life seriously as a carpenter—after two false starts in a cotton mill and a velveteen factory—and was then swept into the teetotal movement. It is difficult in these more sober days to realise the deplorable drinking habits which prevailed in the early nineteenth century. Nowhere were they worse than in the Midlands and the North. Never half-hearted about anything, the new recruit—the 'Manchester Carpenter', as he came to be known—was soon a familiar figure on the platform.

at teetotal meetings. 'Young, bony, big, and exceedingly uncultivated', as he is described by Thomas Whittaker, one of the pioneers of the movement, he took up the cause with his whole heart and soul. He was only twenty when he left Manchester for London, tramping every inch of the road for lack of funds, turning the journey into a temperance tour by delivering public addresses in the towns and villages on the way. In London, fortunately, he fell among Friends, and the Quakers helped him materially after he had been enrolled among the lecturers of the National Temperance Society.

It is no part of our purpose to describe his wanderings up and down the country, with his watchman's rattle to call his audience together, and his broad Lancashire dialect to let everyone know that there was little doubt about his being the well-known 'Manchester Carpenter'. His earnestness of purpose and intense enthusiasm were allied to a mind bent on self-improvement. By careful reading he not only made himself acquainted with much that was best in English literature, but acquired no mean knowledge of the French language. At the end of his teetotal lectureship Cassell, now a happily married man, started a tea and coffee business in the City, with headquarters successively in Coleman Street and Fenchurch Street, and a side line in patent medicines. He was among the first to undertake the distribution of tea and coffee in packet form, and conducted the business with the thoroughness which characterised all his undertakings.

Two years after embarking on this scheme Cassell turned his thoughts to a plan for helping the temperance cause by means of cheap and enlightening publications for the people. With his wife's encouragement, and the substantial help which she was able to bring with her own inheritance, he started the *Teetotal Times* and the *Teetotal Essayist*, when the fortunes of the movement were none too flourishing. On 1st July 1848 he launched the first number of a fully equipped weekly journal, the *Standard of Freedom*, published at fourpence halfpenny a copy. This was succeeded in 1850 by a penny weekly called the *Working Man's Friend and Family Instructor*. He now had his own printing office, and from the first the new paper was his own production, with his address for the time being at No. 335 Strand. Then came in steady succession the popular serials and periodicals like *Cassell's Popular Educator*, the *Magazine of Art*, the *Illustrated Family Bible*, the *Family Paper*, the *History of England*,

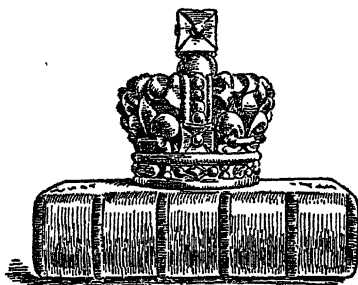
the *Natural History*, *Cassell's Magazine*, the *Quiver*, and illustrated editions of *Don Quixote*, and other standard works in weekly parts—all helping to develop a healthy and popular taste in art and letters. Early in 1859 Cassell entered into partnership with the printers Petter and Galpin, who were associated with him in several of these enterprises, and helped him to build up the great printing and publishing house in La Belle Sauvage.

Time was when La Belle Sauvage Yard rattled to the tune of pack-horse and coach, or gave itself up to an evening's entertainment at the hands of a company of players; many actors in the early days of the English stage judging themselves lucky if they could secure a galleried inn for their performances. It probably gave an extra fillip to Cassell's zeal when he came with his temperance enthusiasm to La Belle Sauvage in the middle of last century to know that he was superseding the old traditions of the yard with other and more sedate associations. It is worth remembering that he was himself an innkeeper's son, having been born in 1817 at the Ring o' Bells, in the Old Churchyard, Manchester, of which his father was the landlord.

The origin of the sign of 'La Belle Sauvage' has given rise to many romantic theories, but the truth seems to be that the inn was originally called the Bell, and presently came to be known also as 'Savage's Inn', with the result that somehow the two names became inextricably mixed. After many vicissitudes the old inn was demolished in 1873 to provide for the growing needs of the printing and publishing firm—until German bombs demolished it in the second World War.

John Cassell, who died in 1865, ranks as a pioneer of cheap literature with the brothers William and Robert Chambers, and Charles Knight. Knight, who survived Cassell by eight years, had a passion for cheapness which was more profitable to the public than himself. His first business came to grief in the financial crisis which ruined Scott and his publishers and spread disaster among many smaller houses. Some of his chief ventures after that event, such as the *Penny Encyclopædia*, were issued when he was acting as publisher to the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, organised by Brougham and others. He held this post until the society itself came to grief in 1846 over the *Biographical Dictionary*, winding up with a loss of nearly £5000. Other works more closely identified with his name were his *Popular History of England*, his

Pictorial Shakespeare, his *London*, and his Shilling Volumes for all Readers—running to nearly two hundred volumes in all and beginning with his life of Caxton. Among his own books, either written or edited by himself, the most popular included his *Half-hours with the Best Authors*, and *Shadows of the Old Booksellers*.



THE BIBLE AND THE CROWN

The oldest publishing sign in London, under which the Rivingtons traded for a century and three-quarters. It is now in the possession of their successors, Longmans, Green and Co.

THREE-DECKER DAYS

OTHER publishers whose enterprise left its mark on the reading habits of the people are half-forgotten to-day or remembered no more. Alexander Strahan, for instance, who, eager to follow pioneers like Knight and Chambers by supplying, in his own words, 'such literature as will not ignobly interest nor frivolously amuse, but convey the wisest instruction in the pleasantest manner', founded *Good Words* under Dr. Norman Macleod's editorship in 1860. His object was to bridge the wide gulf which then existed between secular and sacred reading. Though bitterly attacked by the narrower sections of the Evangelical school the new periodical gradually succeeded, with authors like Charles Kingsley, Anthony Trollope, Dean Stanley, and F. D. Maurice writing side by side with staunch upholders of orthodoxy, in attaining what was at that time the largest circulation of any journal of the kind in the kingdom.

In all too rapid succession *Good Words* was followed by the *Sunday Magazine*, *Good Words for the Young*, the *Argosy*, and the *Contemporary Review*, Strahan at the same time developing a book-publishing business with equal energy. Unfortunately his financial gifts were not as shrewd as his literary judgment, and he was at length forced to acknowledge defeat. With all his unbusinesslike habits Strahan seems to have been a lovable character. Although somewhat reserved he drew men by a fascination all his own, as Professor Blaikie, who became editor for a time of the *Sunday Magazine*, testifies in his *Recollections of a Busy Life*:

He had no taste for the old ruts of printers and publishers: his fancy was for 'fresh woods and pastures new'. He had an excellent taste in printing, binding and the outward look of books; and he had an equally correct insight into the internal quality of their contents. He seemed to know by a remarkable instinct what would take the public taste. Probably he trespassed more than was strictly accurate into the province of the editor. The wooden and the leaden had no chance with him. But then his generosity as a publisher was quite phenomenal. What Archibald Constable

had been at the beginning of the century, Alexander Strahan aimed to be further on. It was his generosity to authors, joined to a lack of financial insight, that led him into difficulty. Sanguine and buoyant to a degree, he never seemed to fear any exhaustion of resources. To Tennyson it is understood that he promised £4000 for the right to publish his books. But he found, like Constable, that you cannot allow to generosity an unbounded sphere.

The first Richard Bentley, who became Publisher in Ordinary to Queen Victoria, and one of the stalwarts of the three-volume novel days, is also little more than a name to the present generation. Bentley started a printing concern early in the nineteenth century with his brother Samuel, and in 1829 was taken into partnership by Henry Colburn, whose publications had already included the Diaries of Evelyn and Pepys. In addition to publishing new books, Colburn not only ran a fashionable library in New Burlington Street, but speculated at different times in at least half a dozen periodicals, among them the *New Monthly Magazine*, whose editors included Thomas Campbell, Bulwer Lytton, Theodore Hook, and Harrison Ainsworth.

After three years' partnership Colburn sold his business in New Burlington Street to Bentley, who, equally enterprising in periodical speculations, started, among other ventures, *Bentley's Miscellany* (1837), with Charles Dickens as editor. *Oliver Twist*, as mentioned on p. 246, made its first appearance in the pages of this magazine, which was subsequently merged in *Temple Bar*. Bentley, whose famous Red Room in New Burlington Street had been the meeting place of such men as Dickens and the Disraelis, Cruikshank and Leech, also made a big success of his library of Standard Novels, which ran to 127 volumes. He was succeeded by his son, George Bentley, who edited *Temple Bar* until his own death in 1895, and 'discovered', or helped very largely to introduce, such popular novelists as Wilkie Collins, Mrs. Henry Wood, Mrs. Riddell, and Miss Rhoda Broughton.¹

¹ George Bentley was succeeded by the second Richard Bentley, who retired a few years later, when his business was absorbed by Macmillan's. The second Richard Bentley lived until 1936, when he died at the age of eighty-one, leaving an unrivalled collection of letters and other documents, as well as books, on which, it is understood, Michael Sadleir is basing his historical study of the great publishing firms of the old three-decker days.

In the meantime Henry Colburn, repenting of the bargain which he had made with Bentley, to the effect that he would not start publishing again in London, or within twenty miles of it, had retreated to Windsor. The call of the town, however, was too much for him. Sacrificing his guarantees, he made a fresh start in Great Marlborough Street. Here he rivalled Bentley in helping to fill the libraries with three-volume novels at a guinea and a half the set, and issuing, besides, such weightier works as Burke's *Peerage*, *Baronetage*, and *Landed Gentry*; and Strickland's *Lives of the Queens of England*. This last was one of Colburn's most profitable ventures. He paid £2000 for the copyright, which, after his death, was sold again for no less than £6900. Among the popular novelists who gathered round Colburn in those palmy days of the old three-decker were G. P. R. James, Captain Marryat, Lord Lytton, and Theodore Hook. Some of these authors published with him before his partnership with Bentley. Another celebrity associated with Colburn during the same period was Benjamin Disraeli, whose first novel, *Vivian Grey*, he issued in 1826, his second tale, *The Young Duke*, following in 1831. When Colburn retired he was succeeded by Hurst and Blackett, though he retained certain copyrights, which, after his death in 1855, realised £14,000—including the £6900 for Strickland's *Lives*.

The name of Routledge follows naturally upon that of Colburn, for the popular novelists of the one house were largely exploited by the other for the Railway and other libraries which, in the mid-nineteenth century, formed the bulk of W. H. Smith and Son's bookstall business. George Routledge founded his own firm on second-hand books and remainders at a little shop in Ryder's Court, Leicester Square. Then, starting the Railway Library and moving to larger quarters in Soho Square, he took into partnership his brother-in-law William Warne, and subsequently—on making a fresh move to Farringdon Street, Frederick Warne.¹ The Railway Library and the Universal Library—which they circulated all over the country by their own travellers, as well as by means of Smith's bookstalls—were so successful that Routledge's were able in 1853 to offer Lord Lytton £20,000 for a ten years' right to issue cheap

¹ Frederick Warne, on the death of his brother and the dissolution of the partnership, established a new business which still has its address in Bedford Street, Strand. The firm of Frederick Warne and Co. is associated with the Chandos Classics, the *Lansdowne*, *Shakespeare*, and popular editions of many other standard authors; as well as *Nuttall's Dictionary*, and the works of Beatrix Potter.

editions of his published works. It says much for their enterprise, as well as for Lord Lytton's contemporary popularity, that, at the end of the ten years, Routledge and Sons were ready to renew the contract. Most of the popular authors of the day were represented in one or other of these cheap series, and their circulations were enormous. The Railway Library eventually numbered over 1000 volumes.

The supremacy of the three-decker novel in the eighteen-sixties and 'seventies was an artificial vogue largely created by the circulating libraries—or 'succulating' libraries as 'Q' once described them—headed by Charles Edward Mudie. Mudie was a stationer-bookseller, with a modest little shop in Southampton Row, before he started to lend books in 1842. The library grew with sound business methods and a sure perception of what the reading public wanted. It was soon sufficiently established to publish Lowell's poems in England and move into its first vast storehouse in New Oxford Street. Mudie's guinea subscription for new books greatly increased the circulation of the three-volume novel. The short-lived but suicidal opposition of the Library Company, which endeavoured to undermine Mudie's with a half-guinea subscription—and was hoist with its own petard, so to speak—created a boom in fiction which, from the publishers' point of view, was too good to last.

In his *Random Recollections of an Old Publisher*, William Tinsley, of Tinsley Brothers, whose business was founded in 1854, bears witness to the phenomenal sales of those days. According to this authority, W. H. Smith and Son, whose firm had started about 1820, in a small stationer's shop in York Street, Grosvenor Square, would not have ventured into the booklending business had Mudie come to terms with them when they secured their contracts for selling books and newspapers at most of the principal railway stations in England. In one of the contracts there was a special stipulation that books should be lent, as well as sold, from the different stalls on that line. Smith's, apparently, had no desire to add that branch to their business, and offered Mudie a very large subscription for the loan of a certain number of books in order that they might fulfil this contract. 'But Mr. Mudie was then in the full tide of his popular guinea subscription, and he refused Smith and Son's offer', little dreaming that very soon afterwards they would not only be lending books on that particular line, but on almost all the important railways in the kingdom. Nevertheless, Mudie's

library continued to grow by leaps and bounds until it migrated to New Oxford Street, where it remained in the stuccoed Regency building for some seventy or eighty years: long after the founder's death, which took place in 1890, and the passing of the three-volume novel. Living too long on the traditions of the past it could not adjust itself to rapidly changing conditions, or increasing competition from progressive rivals. Reorganisation in the twentieth century came too late. When the freehold in New Oxford Street was sold in 1930 the business was transferred in two sections to other parts of London—Kingsway and Southwark Street—but never recovered. Some years later it was forced into voluntary liquidation, finally closing its doors on 10th July 1937.

W. H. Smith's, it may be added, had inaugurated their railway bookstall station at Euston Station on 1st November 1848. When the library department was born the firm endeavoured to meet the demand for light literature by themselves printing popular reprints of fiction in yellow covers—the originals of the 'yellow-backs.' Though these were very successful, the firm presently withdrew from a field which they did not feel they were entitled to exploit, and restricted their activities to the distributing side. Their chain of bookshops which now links up most of our leading towns, dates from 1906, when W. H. Smith and Son's connexion with the L. and N.W.R. and G.W.R. ceased, after existing for over half a century. When Smith's decided not to renew the contracts in question on the new terms demanded only ten weeks remained before they had to close the bookstalls affected; but on the date appointed all the shops with which they substituted their stalls were in being in nearly every town that mattered.

Miss Braddon¹—to return to the 'Three Decker' days—issued a number of her novels with the Tinsleys, apart from *Lady Audley's Secret*, which ran through eight three-volume editions during its first three months. 'Perhaps no book that was ever written', says Tinsley, 'had a more adventurous run for fortune than *Lady Audley's Secret*. It was begun as a serial in a little publication called *Robin Goodfellow*, which had a short life, even though edited by Charles, afterwards Dr., Mackay. It was re-commenced as a serial in the *Sixpenny Magazine* which, I think, died before the book was finished.

¹ Miss Braddon married John Maxwell, an energetic publisher of periodicals in the second half of the nineteenth century. One of his ventures was *Belgravia*, which he started with his wife.

It was announced to be published at two shillings, and a Mr. Skeet,¹ a publisher in King William Street, Strand, ventured it in three volumes, before we gave Miss Braddon, I feel sure, a larger sum for it than she had dreamed of. After that we gave her five hundred pounds and other handsome presents, and then we had a good profit on the book; and', he adds, 'we also did very well out of *Aurora Floyd*.' Tinsley did so well out of *Lady Audley's Secret*, it is worth adding, that he invested some of his profit in building his villa at Barnes—'Audley Lodge'.

Other novelists for whom the Tinsleys published were Wilkie Collins, James Payn, Mrs. Henry Wood, Rosa N. Carey, William Black, Sir Walter Besant, and George Augustus Sala. More noteworthy than any of these, from the literary point of view, though far less profitable to the publishers, were the early books of George Meredith and Thomas Hardy. Meredith issued *Rhoda Fleming* with them, but it 'had a very poor sale', says Tinsley. With two or three other exceptions, Meredith's novels were all published by Chapman and Hall, until, as mentioned on p. 297, they were taken over by Constable's. Thomas Hardy published his first novel, *Desperate Remedies*, with the Tinsley Brothers in 1871. It appeared anonymously, and in three volumes. William Tinsley says that he accepted *Desperate Remedies* thinking that, in spite of the introduction of what he describes as 'almost ultra-sensational matter', there was enough of the bright side of human nature in the book to sell at least one fair edition. 'However, there was not; but for a first venture', he adds, 'I do not think Mr. Hardy had much to complain about.' The same publisher bought the copyright of Hardy's second novel, *Under the Greenwood Tree*, and published it in the following year (1872), convinced that he had secured the best little prose idyll that he had ever read:

I almost raved about the book [he writes], and gave it away wholesale to Pressmen and anyone I knew interested in good fiction. But, strange to say, it would not sell. Finding it hung on hand in the original two-volume form, I printed it in a very pretty illustrated one-volume form. That edition was a failure. Then I published it in a two-shilling form, with paper covers, and that edition had a very poor sale indeed; and yet it was one of the best Press-noticed books I ever published.

¹ Charles J. Skeet, a well-known publisher and second-hand bookseller in his day.

The Tinsleys tried Hardy's third novel, *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, as a serial in *Tinsley's Magazine*, and afterwards in three volumes (1873), but the immediate result was equally disappointing. Then, however, came the commission to write *Far From the Madding Crowd* for the *Cornhill*—the turning-point in Hardy's career, for at that time it was by no means certain that he would not return to his profession as an architect. Literature, however, was steadily asserting her claim, though for many years the wanderings of the novelist's books among the publishers were curiously unsettled. *Far From the Madding Crowd* ran serially through the *Cornhill* unsigned, but when Smith and Elder brought it out in three volumes in the same year (1874) its success was unqualified. Smith and Elder saw it through four editions before parting with it to Sampson Low's, who, in their turn, reprinted it at least half a dozen times before Osgood, M'Ilvaine took it over for their complete uniform edition of Hardy's works.

Osgood, M'Ilvaine and Company had started in Albemarle Street in 1891 when J. R. Osgood became the English representative of the New York house of Harper and Brothers in succession to Sampson Low. Osgood died some years later, and Harpers, in due course, ran their London office under their own name, subsequently moving to Great Russell Street, where they are now represented by Hamish Hamilton.¹ They were not the first American publishers to possess a branch of their own in Great Britain. That distinction belongs to Putnam's Sons, whose founder, George Palmer Putnam, established an office in London in 1841. The name of George Palmer Putnam, like that of his son who succeeded him as head of the firm, Dr. George Haven Putnam, will always be honoured among English authors for his disinterested efforts on behalf of international copyright.

Other American houses have their own London offices or separate English companies to-day, among them Charles Scribner's Sons, J. B. Lippincott Company, D. Appleton and Company, and Ginn and Company. None, however, linked the literatures of England

¹ Hamish Hamilton, forming a new company, started publishing under his own imprint in London in 1931. Half American by birth and with many Transatlantic ties of affection and friendship, his ambition had long been to contribute something to the cause of Anglo-American understanding in the face of the growing menace of German aggression. This he succeeded in doing with books by such illuminating American correspondents as John Gunther, Walter Duranty, Virginia Cowles and Vincent Sheean, which brought him one resounding success after another, and, with novels by Angela Thirkell and other best-sellers, placed the firm securely on its feet. It commemorated its first ten years' harvest in its anthology *Decade, 1931-1941*.

and the United States so closely together as Dr. Putnam, who, right up to his death in 1930, was almost as well known in this country as in America. From the beginning of the first World War he proved one of the Allies' truest friends on the other side of the Atlantic. After the passing of the International Copyright Act in 1891, he had received a handsome tribute from English men of letters. This took the form of a memorial expressing their warm appreciation of his persistent efforts on behalf of a measure which 'removed a great injustice, promoted the interests of literature both in England and America, and tended to increase the mutual esteem and good feeling of Englishmen and Americans.' Thomas Hardy, who was one of the distinguished signatories to this tribute, signalled the passing of the new Act by transferring all his books to Osgood, M'Ilvaine and Company, presently succeeded, as already mentioned, by Harper and Brothers.

'Hardly anything in my publishing career troubled me more than parting with Mr. Thomas Hardy', wrote Edward Marston, for many years the *doyen* of his craft and head of Sampson Low, Marston and Company. He had published most of the novelist's books before J. R. Osgood came from America to start his London business in Albemarle Street, not many doors from John Murray. It was not without a remonstrance from Edward Marston that the change was made. Hardy, on his part, in a letter to his old publisher quoted by Marston in his reminiscences, *After Work*, expressed the hope that 'the situation which has arisen, as it were by accident, may not interfere with our old-established friendship.' No publisher, indeed, made more friends among his authors than did Edward Marston in the course of his sixty years' experience of the trade. 'Surely one of the greatest pleasures of a publisher's life', he wrote, 'is that of being on terms of intimacy and friendship with the authors with whom he has to deal: this helps to counterbalance the chagrins that weigh him down when books don't sell: for the old theory that publishers could not make any losses has long since exploded.' If friendships could compensate for losses of this sort, Edward Marston was happy indeed. R. D. Blackmore and William Black, Fred Burnaby and H. M. Stanley, and a host of other celebrities whose books he published, tell, in their own words, how deep was their personal regard for him.

'If ever an author has reason to speak well of his publisher', wrote W. Clark Russell, 'I am the man. From the beginning Mr.

Marston honoured me by exhibiting confidence in my work. He took everything I sent him, much of which I am glad is forgotten, and in his correspondence I never failed to meet with the same encouraging note. I was delighted with the success of *The Wreck of the Grosvenor*, quite as much for my dear old friend's sake as for my own. He again and again extended his hand, when most publishers, as I now understand them, would have turned their backs.' The engaging personality of the publisher emerged in his reminiscences, together with his 'transparent honesty and prevailing good-humour', as William Black once remarked. 'The Amateur Angler' wrote so many little books of his own that Sir Edwin Arnold once warned him that 'if the great publishers turn authors, mind we don't take our revenge and turn publishers.' His longest and closest friendship was with Blackmore, whose connexion began with *Lorna Doone* in 1869 and continued till his death in 1900. Blackmore's first novel, *Clara Vaughan*, was published by Macmillan in 1864.

The story of *Lorna Doone's* cool reception at first, and its sudden success when reprinted three years later—largely because the reading public found the name akin to that of the English Princess who had lately become Marchioness of Lorne (afterwards Duchess of Argyll) has often been told. 'But for you', wrote Blackmore to Marston in 1879, '*Lorna Doone* might never have seen the light. All the magazines rejected her, and Smith and Elder refused to give £200 for the copyright.' Marston's *Memoirs* include recollections of Charles Reade, Harrison Weir, Wilkie Collins, James Payn, Victor Hugo, Jules Verne, and other authors with whom his house was associated, as well as two chapters on his close relations with H. M. Stanley. Stanley was a loyal friend. 'I do not think that this absence', he wrote to his publisher on one of the expeditions through the heart of Africa, 'to whatever period it might be stretched, will tarnish or lessen the friendship for you my memory cherishes'; and subsequently, in connexion with the negotiations for his book, he declared: 'I will tell you that if'—mentioning another publisher—'were to offer me £10,000 down I would not leave you!' Marston went to Egypt to meet the explorer on his return from 'Darkest Africa', and made the arrangements for the publication of that work in all parts of the globe.

He was also connected for fifty-eight years with the *Publishers' Circular*, long edited by his son, Robert B. Marston, who died in 1927, and now by his grandson, E. W. Marston. The *P.C.*, as it is

familiarly called in the trade, was established in the year in which Queen Victoria came to the throne. Sampson Low, who had started a bookshop and circulating library in Lamb's Conduit Street—then a more fashionable neighbourhood than at the present day—had been appointed by a committee of leading London publishers to conduct the paper on their behalf. Subsequently Sampson Low sold his library and started the publishing business to which Edward Marston, who had joined the firm in 1846 and left to establish a profitable Australian connexion, returned as a partner in 1856. Nine years afterwards Sampson Low took over the *Publishers' Circular*, and was associated with it as editor until 1883, three years before he died. Out of the *P.C.* have grown the volumes of the *English Catalogue*, invaluable as a record of books published since the beginning of the Victorian era.

The other trade publications, the *Bookseller* and the *Reference Catalogue of Current Literature*—the 'Bookseller's Bible', replaced as a stop-gap during the second World War by 'Whitaker's Five-Year Cumulative List, 1939-1943'—owe their origin to Joseph Whitaker¹ of *Almanack* fame. In his early career Joseph Whitaker acted for some years as London agent for J. H. and J. Parker of Oxford—Keble's *Christian Year*, which they published in 1827, went through 150 editions before it ran out of copyright—and from 1856 to 1859 edited the *Gentleman's Magazine*. In 1859 he played a prominent part in a serious but unsuccessful effort to organise the trade against the ever-increasing evils of underselling. The rebellious booksellers had been the chief thorn in the sides of their more conservative brethren for generations. Some sixty years before, as already mentioned, they formed themselves into an independent body under the title of 'Associated Booksellers'—or 'Associated Busy Bees', as they came to be called from the device of the Beehive which they used in their books. How long this society lasted we cannot say, but the first association of the protectionists appears to have been formed in 1812 and remodelled about 1828, when underselling, as ordinarily understood in the discount system of the nineteenth century—not the cheapening Remainder trade as practised by Lackington—first seriously threatened the well-being of the

¹ Not to be confused with George Byron Whittaker, whose firm was one of the largest in the publishing and wholesale bookselling trade during the first half of the nineteenth century. Among their copyrights were the *Bibliotheca Classica*, afterwards the property of George Bell and Sons, and works by Sir Walter Scott, Miss Mitford, and Mrs. Trollope.

trade. The 1828 association was not much more effective than the earlier organisation.

It was not until the Booksellers' Association was established twenty years later, and a new 'trade ticket' prepared in 1850, that war was formally declared against all booksellers who did not abide by its rules and regulations. Sampson Low, then editor of the *Publishers' Circular*, was the secretary of the committee elected to manage the business, and so thoroughly was the work done while it lasted that the undersellers, or Free Traders, had to call for assistance. Public feeling was largely on the side of Free Trade, and nearly all the leading authors of the day condemned the Protectionists in what they considered their arbitrary practice of keeping up prices. 'My answer to this question, for my own interests, and for those of the world, so far as I can see them', wrote Carlyle, 'is decidedly "No" . . . and, indeed, I can see no issue, of any permanency, to this controversy that has now arisen, but absolute "Free-trade" in all branches of Bookselling and Book-publishing.'

Dickens presided at a meeting of protest against restriction held in May 1852 at John Chapman's bookshop in the Strand, and declared himself, on principle, most strongly opposed to any system of exclusion, holding that every man, whatever his calling, must be left to the fair and free exercise of his own honest thrift and enterprise. Gladstone, who declared that the state of the bookselling trade as then existing was a disgrace to civilisation, felt so strongly in the matter that he personally supplied certain of the nonconforming booksellers with his pamphlets on Italy, which his publisher, being a member of the Booksellers' Association, could not sell to them. In the face of all this influential opposition the Booksellers' Association appealed for an opinion from a board composed of Lord Campbell—it was seven years before he became Lord Chancellor—and two distinguished historians, George Grote and Dean Milman. In the deputation from the Booksellers' Association the chief spokesman was William Longman, himself an author, as well as a partner in the great publishing house, and his evidence went to prove that force, or coercion of some kind, would alone prevent one bookseller from underselling his neighbour.

The arbitrators, however, decided against coercion of any sort. 'Such regulations', said Lord Campbell, 'seem *prima facie* to be indefensible, and contrary to the freedom which ought to prevail in commercial transactions. Although the owner of property may

put what price he pleases upon it when selling it, the condition that the purchaser, after the property has been transferred to him, and he has paid the purchase money, shall not resell it under a certain price, derogates from the rights of ownership which, as purchaser, he has acquired.' Thereupon the Booksellers' Association dissolved, and the effort made in 1859-60 to form a fresh society to safeguard the interests of the trade in the same matter—for underselling was now unrestricted and unashamed—collapsed for lack of unanimity. It was not, as we shall presently see, until the end of the nineteenth century that the different branches of the trade succeeded in binding themselves together in protection of their separate interests.

The authors had formed a permanent society of their own before the present Booksellers' and Publishers' Associations came into being. Several premature attempts—very similar to the ill-starred society formed in 1736—were made earlier in the nineteenth century to protect the interests of authors. The first of these was the 'Society for the Encouragement of Literature', under the patronage of the Duke of Sussex and a noble array of titled presidents; and application for a charter, it was announced, would be made to the Crown. The society was founded in 1825, mainly because 'the difficulties with which authors have to contend in bringing their works to the public, have long been the subject of complaint among literary men; and have, in many instances, repressed the early efforts of genius.' Unlike the 1736 scheme, the society announced that it would not interfere with the established trade of the bookseller, and that the public would be supplied with the works through the medium of the regular publishers. Unfortunately, the scheme was still-born, through the bankruptcy of the bankers in whose hands the funds had been placed. Several other attempts followed of a similar nature, the most ambitious being the 'National Association for the Encouragement and Protection of Authors', proposed under equally noble patronage in 1838, but without meeting with any apparent success. Six years later a pamphlet was published by John Petheram in Chancery Lane, giving 'Reasons for establishing an Authors' Publication Society; by which Literary Labour would receive a more adequate Reward, and the Price of all New Books be much Reduced'; but authors had to wait for the advent of Sir Walter Besant before anything in the shape of a permanent society was established for them.

A whole chapter might be written on the experiences of authors who, for various reasons, have strayed on their own account along the hazardous paths of publishing. Before the birth of the printing press they circulated their manuscripts among their friends and patrons without the aid of the professional intermediary, except to employ the scribes, when necessary, to make their copies. After Caxton's day, as we have shown, there were occasional authors whose independent spirit prompted them to break a lance with the trade.

The most conspicuous, and by far the most successful of modern ventures, was Ruskin's experiment, dating from 1871, when he started his arcadian publishing business at Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent—planting it, as one of his critics remarked, 'in the middle of a country field'. The description was true, but Ruskin's enthusiasm, and the whole-hearted devotion of George Allen and his family, overcame all natural obstacles. Allen had been a promising and favourite pupil with Ruskin in the days when the master, together with Rossetti and Hunt, Burne-Jones and William Morris, taught drawing at the Working Men's College founded by F. D. Maurice in Great Ormond Street. Subsequently he became his assistant as drawing-master there, and studied engraving under him, as well as etching under Le Keux and mezzotint under Thomas Lupton. He executed for Ruskin some of his finest steel engravings, and made geological studies with him in the Swiss mountains. The venture started with the first number of *Fors Clavigera*, unadvertised—for Ruskin had a horror of the ordinary book advertisements—and tabooed by the regular trade. The firm of George Allen and Sons, begun in this unconventional fashion, was essentially a family affair and flourished until long after Ruskin's death. Even Mrs. Allen did her share in the early days in handling orders which came pouring in from all parts of the kingdom, sometimes working with her husband and children until two in the morning preparing the copies for distribution. A touching tribute to her devotion was paid by Ruskin upon the death of his mother, when, removing a ring from her finger, he handed it on as a gift to Mrs. Allen.

The price charged for *Fors* was sevenpence at first, but this was afterwards raised to tenpence each number. With characteristic frankness Ruskin at once took his readers into his confidence. 'It cost me', he explained, '£10 to print 1,000, and £5 more to give a picture,

and a penny off my sevenpence to send you the book; a thousand sixpences are £25; when you have bought a thousand *Fors* off me, I shall therefore have £5 for my trouble, and my single shopman, Mr. Allen, £5 for his; we won't work for less, either of us. And I mean to sell all my large books, henceforth, in the same way, well printed, well bound, and at a fixed price; and the trade may charge a proper and acknowledged profit for their trouble in retailing the book. Then the public will know what they are about, and so will the tradesmen. I, the first producer, answer to the best of my power for the quality of the book—paper, binding, eloquence and all; the retail dealer charges what he ought to charge openly; and if the public do not choose to give it they can't get the book. That is what I call legitimate business.'

Ruskin objected to the whole system of discounts and abatements, which he saw, more clearly than the trade itself, would have to be remodelled before the evils of underselling could be cured. Thus he anticipated the net system, which was not adopted by the trade until the end of the century. 'The price of these Letters to friends of mine, as supplied by me, the original inditer, to all and sundry, through my only shopman, Mr. Allen', he writes on a later page, 'is sevenpence per epistle, and not fivepence halfpenny; and the trade profit on them is intended to be, and must eventually be, as I intend, a quite honestly confessed profit, charged to the customer, not compressed out of the author; which object may be easily achieved by the retail bookseller, if he will resolvedly charge the symmetrical sum of tenpence per epistle over his counter, as it is my purpose he should.'

The first numbers of *Fors* were printed for Ruskin through his old publishers, Smith and Elder, but that connexion ceased in 1873, and the little Kentish business was extended until it took over the production—though never the printing and binding—of all the founder's works. In spite of the high prices which Ruskin charged for his works—13s. unbound for ordinary books and 22s. 6d. for the illustrated works—he succeeded in finding a sufficient number of buyers to run the business at a handsome profit, notwithstanding the opposition of most of the booksellers, who protested against a system which was contrary to so many of the accepted rules of the trade. On one occasion, in 1879, George Allen had occasion to write to Ruskin of a booksellers' meeting which he had attended—only to be groaned at. 'It gives me much pain to think of it', wrote

Ruskin in reply. 'You have certainly had a great deal to put up with in fighting this battle—and I had no conception myself of the way my friends would fail me in it, nor of the general folly of the public. It is like beginning a battle with a *man*, and finding him change into a heap of mud. But we'll *wash* him away, if we can't *throttle* him!'

For they did win the battle in the end, coming to terms in 1882, when the first offers of peace came from the other side. A happy compromise was arrived at by means of terms acceptable to the regular booksellers as well as to Ruskin, and the books themselves were printed and issued at less exclusive prices. Ruskin was forced to see that his prohibitive prices prevented his works from reaching the very classes in whom he was chiefly interested, and the more reasonable sums charged for later editions increased his circulation enormously. Allen, who, by this time, had opened his first London office in Bell Yard, by the Law Courts, now developed his business on ordinary publishing lines, and, moving to Ruskin House in Charing Cross Road in the early 'nineties, gradually built up a sound connexion with other authors in all branches of letters, with Ruskin's works always, of course, as the mainstay of the firm. Ruskin's long and honourable friendship with his publisher ended only with his death. No more eloquent proof of his regard for George Allen could be given than the following letter, which he wrote from Brantwood on 15th April 1878—seven years before he paid his last visit to his Kentish publishing house:

DEAR ALLEN,—How good and kind you are, and have always been. I trust, whatever happens to me, that your position with the copyright of my books, if anybody cares for them, and with the friends gained by your honesty and industry, is secure on your little piece of Kentish home territory. I write this letter to release you from all debt to me of any kind, and to leave you, with my solemn thanks for all the energy and faith of your life, given to me so loyally, in all that I ever tried to do for good, to do now what is best for your family and yourself.

As I look back on my life in this closing time I find myself in debt, to every friend that loved me, for what a score of lives could not repay, and would fain say to them all, as to you, words of humiliation which I check only because they are so vain.

Ever (Nay—in such a time as this what ‘ever’ is there except
 ‘to-day’—once more) your thankful and sorrowful friend—
 Master no more—

J. RUSKIN

Surely no publisher ever received a more moving letter from an author! Ruskin’s profits were considerably greater than many people supposed, yielding an annual income which averaged as much as £4000 during the last fifteen years of his life. This was just as well; for having in countless acts of generosity given away the fortune of £200,000 which he inherited from his parents, he was entirely dependent for his income upon the profits from his books. George Allen survived Ruskin little more than six years, dying in 1907, within sight of the completion of the Memorial Edition which he had planned as a worthy monument of the master.

His business, continued under the name of George Allen and Sons, afterwards absorbed the publishing department of Bemrose and Sons, a firm founded in 1866 and known chiefly for its topographical, antiquarian and theological books. Subsequently George Allen and Sons were themselves merged in the house of Allen and Unwin. (*See p. 327.*)

William Morris, inspired perhaps by Ruskin’s example, as in the Oxford days, when Ruskin’s teaching pointed out, in Morris’s own words, ‘a new road on which the world should travel’, took over in 1893 the publishing of his own Kelmscott Press productions. ‘There is really no risk in it’, he said. ‘I shall get more money; and the public will have to pay less.’ Hitherto Morris’s ordinary publishers had been Reeves and Turner. In the first place there had been some talk of issuing the Kelmscott Press books without a publisher at all: of selling them, indeed, by auction; but this idea was abandoned, and Morris’s *Story of the Glittering Plain*, the first of the series which was to do so much to revive the art of printing, appeared through Reeves and Turner in the spring of 1891. The last Kelmscott Press book to come from the same publishers was the *Utopia* in the autumn of the following year. Thenceforward, practically all the books in the series bore the imprint: ‘Published by William Morris at the Kelmscott Press.’ The only exceptions were a few productions which, for various reasons, were published elsewhere, such as Rossetti’s poems, issued in two volumes by Ellis and Elvey, and Tennyson’s *Maud*, by Macmillan’s.

The story of the Kelmscott Press belongs to the history of printing rather than that of bookselling, and will be found set forth at length in Mackail's *Life of Morris*. 'The Kelmscott Press', writes Mackail, 'was not carried on to make money: at first he (Morris) would have been content if it had not cost him more than he could afford to spend, and even afterwards it was worked, and the prices fixed for its products, only with the view of making its receipts meet its expenditure. No expense was spared in getting everything connected with it as near his ideal as could be produced; yet in fact it brought in a profit which represented a fairly adequate salary for his own incessant work and oversight, and relieved him from the necessity of economising on any expense which would really add to the excellence and beauty of his printed books.'

Other authors have not been so successful when they tried their hands at publishing their own books. In America Mark Twain did not go so far as to start a new business, but he turned to commission publishing on arbitrary lines. 'When I took up the publication of a book', he once stated, 'I called in a publisher and said to him, "I want you to publish this book along lines which I shall lay down. I am the employer, you are the *employé*. I am going to show them some new kinks in the publishing business. And I want you to draw on me for money, as you go along"—which he did. He drew on me for 56,000 dollars. Then I asked him to take the book and call it off; but he refused to do that.'

Robert Buchanan's experiment was more ambitious. Always a fighter, he rose in revolt against publishers in general in 1896, and brought out his books himself. But Buchanan was the last man in the world to make a fortune at publishing, and he fared no better than was to be expected. The only books of importance that he issued were his last volumes of verse—*The Outcast*, *The Ballad of Mary the Mother*, and *The Devil's Case*. How his restless spirit raged against what he felt to be the injustice of the whole literary business may be seen in the overwrought language of the letter which he wrote, while still his own publisher, to Sir Walter Besant—a letter printed in the *Westminster Gazette* in the very week, which, by a strange chance, witnessed the deaths of both Besant and Buchanan. 'I say to you now, out of the fulness of my experience, that had I a son who thought of turning to literature as a means of livelihood, and whom I could not dower with independent means of keeping Barabbas and the markets at bay, I would elect, were the choice

mine, to save that son from future misery by striking him dead with my own hand! "Whom the gods love die young," I would say to myself; "whom the gods and Barabbas preserve survive on for despondency, sadness, madness, and despair"; and my son should surely die. For what I have seen I have seen, and what I have suffered I have suffered. . . . The very stones of the street cry out and rebuke you, Sir, when you invite the young and unwary, and above all the honestly inspired, to enter the blood-stained gates of this Inferno.'

Buchanan was as uncompromising in his enmity as generous in his friendship. He probably meant all he said at the time, but his words tend rather to show how the iron had sunk into his soul in the last disappointing years of his career than how hopeless was the literary life, and how cruel were the ways of 'Barabbas'. 'Barabbas', it is scarcely necessary to explain, is in repetition of the legend, 'Now Barabbas was a publisher', for many years attributed to Byron, though John Murray iv long ago made it clear that Byron, who of all men had no reason to complain of his publisher, never said or wrote anything of the sort. The fourth John Murray often heard his father say that this worn-out jest was made by Thomas Campbell, 'in regard to another publisher—who shall be nameless.' It was Campbell, too, who once drank Napoleon's health for ordering a publisher to be shot—as mentioned on p. 218.

One of the chief sources of trouble with authors is that they are naturally careless over business matters. They know little of the technicalities of the craft, though Sir Stanley Unwin, in *The Truth about Publishing*, leaves little excuse for such ignorance to-day. A certain tendency to exaggerate the filthiness of lucre has also done something in the past to encourage the less scrupulous publisher in regarding the author almost as legitimate prey. 'No man but a blockhead', says Johnson, 'ever wrote except for money', and though this has been cried out against as a wilful paradox we have the late Sir Walter Raleigh confirming it as the true creed of the professional author in all countries and at all times. 'Young poets', he writes in his introduction to *Johnson on Shakespeare*, 'may be satisfied with fame, rich amateurs with elegance, missionaries and reformers with influence. But the publisher who should depend for his livelihood on the labours of these three classes would be in a poor way, and indeed, if publishers would

communicate to the world an account of their intimate transactions, they could tell how the author who is content with reputation for his first book talks of nothing but money when he comes to proffer his second.'

We do not hear so much of the filthiness of lucre after Sir Walter Besant placed the profession of letters on a more businesslike footing with the Society of Authors, founded in 1883, and incorporated in the following year under the presidency of Lord Tennyson. Besant himself was well able to look after his own interests, but, knowing how different it was in other cases, he created the society which, in spite of misunderstandings and much misrepresentation, has grown in strength until it is now widely recognised as a potent influence for good. Its aims have been approved by the majority of the publishers, who are as jealous as anybody of the best traditions of their trade.

Sir Walter Besant gathered his inside knowledge of publishing by issuing *Ready Money Mortiboy*—the novel with which he began his literary alliance with James Rice—on commission. The authors in this case were more wary, and more successful than was Mark Twain in the similar circumstances already alluded to. Sir Walter, in *My First Book*, tells the story of this venture as follows:

When the time came for publishing it, we were faced with the fact that a new and anonymous novel is naturally regarded with doubt by publishers. Nothing seems more risky than such a venture. On the other hand, we were perfectly satisfied that there was no risk in our novel at all. This, of course, we had found out, not only from the assurance of Vanity, but also from the reception the work had met with during its progress through the magazine. Therefore we had it printed and bound at our expense, and we placed the book, ready for publication, in the hands of Mr. William Tinsley. We so arranged the business that the printer's bill was not due till the first returns from the publisher. By this artful plan we avoided paying anything at all. We had only printed a modest edition of 600, and these all went off, leaving, of course, a very encouraging margin. The cheap edition was sold to Henry S. King and Company for a period of five years. Then the novel was purchased outright by Chatto and Windus, who still continue to publish it—and, I believe, to sell it.

It is curious to learn to what extent Sir Walter Besant, in his capacity of authors' guardian, persistently broke his own rules. He was always warning writers against signing agreements which ignored any possible source of future profit, yet, with one exception, he invariably sold his books outright to his own publishers, Chatto and Windus—sometimes, however, reserving the dramatic rights. The exception was his *Eulogy of Richard Jefferies*, two-thirds of the profits of which he arranged, with the ready generosity which was characteristic of the man, to be paid to Jefferies' relatives. The *Eulogy* was beneficial in more ways than one, for it gave an immediate impetus to the sale of Jefferies' neglected works. Sir Walter's zeal on behalf of his brother authors was unbounded, but it was sometimes carried to excess. 'No worker in the world', he wrote in 1892, 'not even the needlewoman, is more helpless, more ignorant, more cruelly sweated than the author.' After that it is surprising to learn from Chatto and Windus that Sir Walter's relations with his own publishers were always of an exceptionally cordial nature—as a bundle of letters from the novelist bears witness.

The 'three-decker', which was at the height of its popularity during the Besant and Rice collaboration, maintained its supremacy until 1894, when the circulating libraries refused to take any more novels in that form. With the establishment of the free public libraries, the vogue of the cheap reprint, and the ever-increasing demand for the latest novel, the circulating libraries had to cry 'Halt!' to an artificial fashion which they could no longer afford to encourage. The outcome was the six-shilling novel in one volume. With occasional variations it remained at that price until after the War of 1914-18, when it was raised to seven and sixpence.

Before entering the eighteen-nineties, with all its new men and movements, it is necessary to record the passing of the oldest publishing house in the trade. Rivington's lost that title when Longmans, some few years their junior, acquired their business in 1890. They had long taken their own sign of the Bible and Crown from Paternoster Row—where, since 1833, they had strengthened their hold on the High Church party by publishing the *Tracts for the Times*—moving in 1853 to Waterloo Place. At one time they held the agency of the Cambridge University Press, and in 1863 opened branches of their own, both at Oxford and Cambridge; but these were closed three years later when the business was concentrated

at Waterloo Place—to return to the ‘Row’ in 1890, under the sign of the Ship and Black Swan. This acquisition greatly strengthened Longmans’ theological side. It also brought the *Annual Register*—first edited by Edmund Burke and published every year since Dodsley issued the first volume in 1758—under the same imprint.



EDMUND NEW'S ILLUSTRATION OF THE OLD
BODLEY HEAD IN VIGO STREET

THE EIGHTEEN-NINETIES

THE end of the 'three-decker days' coincided with the beginnings of a whole group of publishers who were destined to make their influence felt. T. Fisher Unwin, one of the first of the newcomers, was born, like many of our earlier publishers, with printer's ink in his veins. His father, Jacob Unwin, was the founder of the Gresham Press; his mother belonged to the Millers of Dunbar and Haddington, printers and booksellers, whose *Cheap Magazine*, to which Sir James Barrie refers in *Auld Licht Idylls*, preceded *Chambers's Journal* by twenty years. After serving with Hodder and Stoughton, Fisher Unwin started on his own account in Holborn Viaduct, where he bought the small publishing business of Marshall, Japp, and Company. Two years later he moved to 26 Paternoster Square. Here, in a room over which appeared the name of Alfred Harmsworth, facing Fisher Unwin's private office, *Answers* was born, to give the future Lord Northcliffe his first journalistic triumph.

With the growth of his own business Fisher Unwin presently established himself at 11 Paternoster Buildings, where many of the early books of a new generation of authors were issued. He was one of the first publishers to welcome the unknown novelist with something like open arms. Hitherto, largely through the influence of the circulating libraries, who frowned on unknown authors, the budding novelist was heavily handicapped by the tradition that first books had to present exceptional promise of popular success to justify the risk of publication. Circulating libraries, however, were no longer the deciding factor. The bookshops and bookstalls were feeling the influence and supplying the needs of a better-educated public, and Fisher Unwin was among the first publishers to tickle its literary palate with unaccustomed fare. The Pseudonym Library, one of his earliest experiments, was evidence of his faith that if a book possessed the right literary quality it would make its way whatever the author's name might be. He confirmed this belief at a later date, when he moved to Adelphi Terrace, with his First Novel Library.

The Pseudonym Library, a series of eighteenpenny, paper-

bound volumes, introduced John Oliver Hobbes (Mrs. Craigie) and a number of other well-known authors. 'Vernon Lee', Olive Schreiner, and W. B. Yeats were also among its brilliant band of contributors. The 'nineties brought from the same publisher many full-length novels which started their authors on the uncertain paths of popularity—Crockett's *Stickit Minister*; Somerset Maugham's *Liza of Lambeth*, the publication of which decided the author to turn from medicine to letters; Conrad's first books—though it was a long time before their worth was appreciated—and others. Apart from fiction Fisher Unwin throughout the 'nineties was building up a business in other directions with his Story of the Nations Library, the 'Mermaid' series of old dramatists, and many works in other branches of letters. From the first he was always interested in political publishing, one of his most successful books in this field being *The Hungry Forties*, chronicles of life under the Bread Tax, edited by his wife, the daughter of Richard Cobden.

Hutchinson and Company started a few years after Fisher Unwin. Like so many other firms their history links up with that of an earlier publisher. The founder, afterwards Sir George Thompson Hutchinson, served his apprenticeship with Alexander Strahan—once a name to conjure with in the book world—and accompanied him on his business trips to America. This and other early opportunities of travel developed a taste for such serial works as the *Living Races of Mankind*, which played a conspicuous part in the new publisher's early activities after setting up for himself in 1887. The first book issued by the firm was Joseph Hatton's *By Order of the Czar*; and though standard books have been issued in practically every department of literature, fiction has maintained its hold ever since.

Hodder and Stoughton, who were also helping to make literary history in the 'eighties and 'nineties, were of an older growth, dating back to the late 'sixties, when Thomas Wilberforce Stoughton, who was for some time with Nisbet and Company, entered into partnership with Matthew Henry Hodder. Both men had been brought up as earnest congregationalists, and the firm acted for a time as the official publishers for the Congregational Union. With a definite interest in evangelical works and Low Church theology, the publishers gradually exploited other fields, especially after Sir William Robertson Nicoll's arrival from Scotland in the 'eighties to become the firm's literary adviser and editor-in-chief. Among his other manifold activities, Robertson Nicoll became the father of the

Kailyard School. If he was not the first editor to recognise J. M. Barrie's genius, he was the first to launch him, through Hodder and Stoughton, as a novelist. Most of Barrie's stories and plays were subsequently issued from the same house, though *The Little Minister*, *Sentimental Tommy*, and *Tommy and Grizel*, came from Cassell's. Robertson Nicoll also discovered 'Ian Maclaren', another of the 'Kailyarders', whose *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush* and other novels, as well as some of Crockett's later tales, were brought out by Hodder and Stoughton.

It was an age when regional fiction was fashionable. Sir A. T. Quiller-Couch, who was himself in the movement with his Cornish tales, wrote in his *Adventures in Criticism* that there could be no denying it: 'with Mr. Barrie in the north, and Mr. Hardy in the south: with Mr. Hall Caine in the Isle of Man, Mr. Crockett in Galloway, Miss Barlow in Lisconnell; with Mr. Gilbert Parker in the territory of the H.B.C., and Mr. Hornung in Australia: with Mr. Kipling scouring the wild world, but returning always to India when the time comes for him to score yet another artistic success.'

Cassell's, besides issuing several of Barrie's books, also shared with Longmans and Chatto and Windus the chief honours as Robert Louis Stevenson's publishers. The last two books of R.L.S., as well as the volume of plays which he wrote with W. E. Henley, came from Heinemann. Cassell's were the first in the field by issuing *Treasure Island*, after it had run its serial course in *Young Folks*. Stevenson's delight on receiving Cassell's offer is best described in his own way: 'How much do you suppose?' he writes in one of his letters at the time, and then, after keeping back the answer in his teasing fashion, adds—'well, a hundred pounds, all alive O! A hundred jingling, tingling, golden, minted quid. Is not this wonderful?' It was not mere chance that Cassell's also published the first book of Quiller-Couch, for *Dead Man's Rock* was a legitimate off-spring of *Treasure Island*. 'I began as a pupil and imitator of Stevenson', the author himself admitted, 'and was lucky in my choice of a master.' Many other books both by 'Q' and 'R.L.S.' came from the same publishers in those days, as well as Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* and tales by Stanley Weyman, and other popular novelists too numerous to mention. In other departments Cassell's list now included Dean Farrar's *Life of Christ*, Sir Robert Ball's popular works on astronomy, Traill's *Social England*, Professor Henry Morley's *English Writers*, and the nature books

by the Kearton brothers, as well as works by H. O. Arnold-Forster, who was a director of Cassell's before he became Secretary of State for War in 1903; and Sir T. Wemyss Reid when managing-director of the firm.¹ Towards the end of 1889, Cassell's made one of those mistakes which always happen, sooner or later, in every publisher's office. They declined Hall Caine's *Bondman*, for which the author asked £400 'outright'.

William Heinemann, then about to start on the career which was so soon to place him in the front rank of English publishers, snapped it up with an advance payment of £300—on account of royalties. It was his first book, and both author and publisher made thousands of pounds by it. Heinemann, who was born at Surbiton, learned his business under Nicholas Trübner, the scholarly publisher on Ludgate Hill, whose deep interest in Oriental studies, as well as in philosophy and religion, gave him a reputation which extended all over Europe. 'Trübner seems to have been a very pleasant old fellow', writes Heinemann's biographer, Frederic Whyte, 'but a youth of Heinemann's eager go-ahead temperament must have found that little office on Ludgate Hill a trifle dull at times, and more than a trifle unsatisfying. The "scores" of the other publishers must often have tantalized him; the triumphant success of Chatto and Windus, for instance, in 1879-80, when within a twelve-month they sold thirteen editions of Justin M'Carthy's *History of Our Own Times*; or that of Longmans in 1882-3 with Froude's sensational biography of Carlyle.' On the death of Trübner in 1884, Heinemann was largely responsible for the management of the firm until he started for himself at 21 Bedford Street, Strand, a building then occupied on the ground floor by an enterprising tailor and on the first floor by the Camera Club. The new publisher began modestly enough with two rooms on the second floor. It was here, on 1st February 1890, that he started with Hall Caine's *Bondman*, issuing that book, with a rare crack of the whip, as a 'new Saga'. The novel not only established the author's popularity, but also gave the publisher a triumphant send-off.

Heinemann was exceptionally fortunate in his early speculations.

¹ Sir T. Wemyss Reid's successor in 1905 was Sir Arthur Spurgeon, whose rule lasted until 1922, when the company was bought by Sir William Berry, now Lord Camrose, and Sir Gomer Berry, now Lord Kemsley. In 1927 it was purchased from them by W. Newman Flower, who joined its editorial department in 1906, and had been its chief editor for many years. Sir Newman Flower, who was knighted in 1938, retired in 1945, handing over control (though remaining chairman) to his son, Major Desmond Flower, M.C.

A few months later he published Whistler's philippic, *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*, which enjoyed another immediate and remarkable sale. Not long afterwards came a further phenomenal success in the *Twenty-five Years of Secret Service*, by 'Major Le Caron', the government spy who disclosed the secrets of the Fenians in America, and played a leading part in the proceedings of the Parnell Commission. The book ran through many editions and led to a formidable list of threatened libel actions—mainly from Irish Members of Parliament—none of which matured. A few years of these and other solid successes placed the new publishing house on a thoroughly sound footing. The Camera Club retired from the first floor; the tailor was induced to give up his shop; and the whole building was adapted to the growing needs of the firm.

Heinemann was sometimes more fortunate in discovering new authors than in keeping them. He lost one of the chances of his life, according to Frederic Whyte, when, after publishing *At the Gate of Samaria*, written while W. J. Locke was 'an obscure young school-master', he allowed that author to slip through his fingers. Robert Hichens was another example. His first book, apart from a boyish novel, was *The Green Carnation*, a satire on Oscar Wilde and the æsthetic movement—described by a well-known weekly at the time as 'the most impudent piece of fiction we have ever met with', published anonymously by Heinemann in 1894, in the 'Pioneer' series. Several of his later novels came from the same publisher in the 'nineties, but Hichens subsequently went elsewhere. Rudyard Kipling was also among Heinemann's early authors with *The Naulakha*, that 'story of West and East', which he wrote in collaboration with Wolcott Balestier, whose sister he married in the year in which the book was published (1892). Balestier, who was closely associated with the publisher in business, died in the same year, and Mr. Kipling's books, as we shall presently see, found other homes.

Heinemann gave a personal touch of enthusiasm and adventure to publishing in the 'nineties which the trade had lacked for some time. Endowed with cosmopolitan tastes and an ardent zeal for art and letters—as well as astute business instincts—he gathered round him a group of authors and artists who in their several ways left their mark on their day and generation. Quick to recognise a new literary movement in any part of the world, he was the means of making Englishmen familiar with the works of many Continental

scholars and novelists. Ibsen, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Björnstjerne Björnson, Georges Brandes, Hauptmann, Maupassant, d'Annunzio, are but a few of the European names which always gave an international flavour to his list. Sir Edmund Gosse, who edited the International Library and the later 'Literature of the World' series, was responsible for the introduction of not a few of these authors. He was intimately associated with Heinemann in many other literary undertakings, including the publication of his own books.

Heinemann was by no means the first publisher to turn Bedford Street, Covent Garden, into one of London's literary centres. The Macmillans, as will presently be recorded, had been established there, on the opposite side of the road, years before. Their removal in 1897 brought on the scene another notable figure, J. M. Dent, who worked as hard in his struggling days as had the founder of the house of Macmillan; and whose ideals of what a publisher's calling should be were equally high. Dent, who had arrived in London in 1867 from Yorkshire—he was a native of Darlington—with eighteenpence in his pocket, was a bookbinder before he took to publishing. His early struggles, as related in his *Memoirs*, would have broken the hearts of most men, but Dent was full of courage. It was only a few months after his bindery in Great Eastern Street had been burned down in 1888 that he made his first bold bid as a publisher, issuing two volumes in the Temple Library. The books struck a fresh note in the trade. When Quaritch saw them he declared that the public would soon want to hear more of the man who produced them. It was the best piece of book-making he had seen for many a year.

The books were Lamb's *Essays of Elia* and *Last Essays*. Dent was happy in his early editors: Augustine Birrell for Lamb; Austin Dobson for Goldsmith; and Edmund Gosse for Beddoes. He was happier still in choosing the *format* of the series: reminiscent of the books published by Kegan Paul under the title of the Parchment Library, but with a distinctive quality of its own. With these, and a series of eighteenth-century novelists, followed by the library on the Medieval Towns—a series which gave the publisher, through his travels, a new interest in life—Dent had made his mark before he achieved his first great popular success with his *Temple Shakespeare*, in forty volumes at a shilling each. This was completed in 1896. So successful was this enterprise that for some time a quarter

of a million volumes were sold every year—‘the largest sale made in Shakespeare’, records the ‘Prince of Reprinters’ in his *Memoirs*, ‘since the plays were written.’ Convinced by this triumph that there was a demand for the revival of the pocket classic, Dent embarked on an equally noteworthy venture in the ‘Temple Classics’ series, edited during its first five years by Sir Israel Gollancz, and afterwards by Oliphant Smeaton.

Soon after starting the ‘Temple Classics’, Dent moved into Macmillan’s old offices in Bedford Street. Now, in his own words, ‘overwhelmingly, even passionately’, engaged in his publishing, he could not resist the temptation to take over the building which had such close associations with names like Tennyson, Kingsley, Tom Hughes, Maurice, Huxley, and others equally renowned. Here he remained until the present Aldine House was built lower down on the other side of Bedford Street. The bindery was removed to Fleur-de-Lis Street, Bishopsgate, in 1899, to remain there until the firm built their own works at Letchworth. ‘Everyman’s’ belongs to a later chapter, but long before the turn of the century J. M. Dent had revolutionised the reprint market by new editions of the world’s masterpieces which were cheap as well as beautiful.

To the ‘nineties, among numerous other productions which stamped him as a master-builder of books, belonged his edition of Malory’s *Morte d’Arthur*, with Aubrey Beardsley’s illustrations. Beardsley was then only nineteen, and as yet unknown, but Dent, when shown some of his drawings by Evans, the city bookseller, as mentioned on p. 241, ‘instinctively felt’, he tells us, ‘that here was a new breath of life in English black and white drawing’; and commissioned him to decorate Malory’s work. The book, ‘a joy to produce’, was issued in monthly parts during 1893 and 1894; and also printed in a large-paper edition, copies of which are now scarce and costly.

Publishing attracts many kinds of men. One of Dent’s neighbours in Bedford Street at this time was Edward Arnold—grandson of Arnold of Rugby and cousin of Mrs. Humphry Ward—whose love of the open air and literary tastes were reflected in his publishing lists. Some years after leaving Oxford, Edward Arnold entered Bentley’s, and having learnt the business, set up for himself in the year which saw Heinemann established, following him to Bedford Street in 1891. Here, among his early successes, he issued *The Memories of Dean Hole* and Lord Milner’s *England in Egypt*. Thirteen

years later he moved to Maddox Street, where many popular memoirs, such as Slatin Pasha's *Fire and Sword in the Sudan*; the *Reminiscences of Sir Henry Hawkins*; the recollections of Lady Randolph Churchill and Lady St. Helier; and Sir Ian Hamilton's campaigning books, first saw the light. Arnold's have also published much distinctive work in fiction, including the novels of E. M. Forster, besides developing a solid connexion in standard school-books and technical works.¹

The year 1890 not only saw the foundation of William Heinemann and Edward Arnold as publishing firms, but also the revival in London of a name which brought back memories of the great days of Edinburgh at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Archibald Constable, the founder of the new house, was a grandson of the Edinburgh potentate. Starting business in Newgate Street and moving thence to Parliament Street, he did not remain with it long, but before withdrawing in 1893 had established the firm at No. 2 Whitehall Gardens, once the home of Sir Robert Peel, and later, of Disraeli. Meanwhile he had been joined by his nephew, Mr. H. Arthur Doubleday, who, upon Mr. Constable's retirement, remained in sole control until 1895. In that year, O. Kyllmann, who was with Macmillan's for a time both in England and America, became his partner. Towards the end of 1895 they secured not only George Meredith's son, W. M. Meredith, as another active partner, but also the copyright in all that author's works.

Meredith, who was not too well paid as a reader for Chapman and Hall, and could not come to terms with the partners for his new novel, seized the opportunity offered by his son's association with the younger firm to change his publishers. *The Amazing Marriage* was thus issued by Constable's before the close of that year. The Meredith connexion consolidated their position and raised their prestige, just as the capture of Rudyard Kipling's poetry a few years before had given lustre to Methuen's new house. Apart from their complete editions of Meredith's works—one in thirty-two volumes and another in seventeen—some of Constable's next undertakings were among the most ambitious productions of the 'nineties. Nansen's *Farthest North* for example, for which they paid £10,000—a sound investment as it happened, the book proving one of the outstanding successes of the Diamond Jubilee Year of

¹ Edward Arnold retired in 1930, the senior partner at the present time being B. W. Fagan, President of the Publishers' Association during the period 1945-47.

1897—and *The Victoria History of the Counties of England*, founded in 1899.

The V.C.H. was initiated by H. A. Doubleday while senior partner of Constable's. Doubleday retired from that firm in 1902 and two years later from the Victoria County History, after planning the whole series and most of the groundwork. He had been joined in the meantime by Dr. William Page, who succeeded him as sole general editor, and carried on the series, in the face of heavy financial difficulties and war-time handicaps, until his death. It was saved from collapse in 1910 by the generosity of the second Lord Hambleden (head of W. H. Smith and Son, which took over the Saint Catherine Press, founded by Doubleday after his retirement from Constable's), who sponsored it until his death in 1928. His son and successor presented his interest in this undertaking to Page, who, in turn, made it over to the University of London, so that the work should be continued after his own death. The latest volume, under the general editorship of L. F. Salzman, was issued by the Oxford University Press for the University of London Institute of Historical Research. Doubleday died in April, 1941.

After leaving the V.C.H. in Page's hands, he had devoted later years of his life in association with Lord Howard de Walden and the Hon. Vicary Gibbs, in another monumental undertaking: the new edition of *The Complete Peerage*. This again was only saved by private donations and the munificence of a number of public-spirited patrons, after Vicary Gibbs, before retiring from it in 1918, had defrayed almost the entire cost of the first five volumes. Most generous of all was Lord Nuffield's benefaction of £50,000, a sum sufficient to ensure the completion of the work. This was in 1938, and led to the formation of the Complete Peerage Trust, the trustees being the Duke of Norfolk, Lord Halifax, Lord Howard de Walden and Granville Proby, Lord Lieutenant of Huntingdonshire and joint-editor of the Victoria County History of Huntingdon.

Rudyard Kipling, whose various publishers from Lahore to London and London to New York, to quote from the bibliography of his works compiled by E. W. Martindell, 'have woven a bibliographical maze such as surely can hardly be paralleled in the literature about literature', found a permanent home for his prose with Macmillan's in 1890, when they published his *Plain Tales from the Hills*. His verses fell into the equally safe hands of Methuen in the following year, when *Barrack Room Ballads* appeared. For the

most part, so far as England was concerned, the author remained faithful to those firms, Macmillan's publishing his prose and Methuen's his poetry.

Macmillan's had concentrated in London since the death of the founder recorded in the preceding chapter. A branch was established first in Henrietta Street, and afterwards in Bedford Street; the final move to the present handsome building in St. Martin's Street, Leicester Square, being made in 1897. The bookselling business at Cambridge had been continued for a time under the name of Macmillan and Bowes. Robert Bowes was a nephew who was brought down from Scotland in 1846—when he was only eleven—to live with his uncles and learn the business. Alexander Macmillan remained a partner in the Cambridge firm until his death in 1896. That firm has been known as Bowes and Bowes since 1899, when Robert Bowes was joined by his son, George Brimley Bowes, a graduate of Emmanuel College, who became head of the business until his retirement, shortly before his death, in 1946.

The fortunes of the parent house made vast strides in London under Alexander Macmillan and George Lillie Craik (husband of the author of *John Halifax, Gentleman*), who became a partner in 1865, and played an unobtrusive but all-important part in the business down to his death in 1905. Alexander Macmillan was in 1863 appointed Publisher to the University of Oxford, a post which he held until 1880, when the delegates of the Oxford Press abandoned the system of employing a private publisher. The University at the same time expressed its appreciation of his services by conferring upon him the honorary degree of Master of Arts. An old oak table, highly treasured by the publishers, bears the autographs of Tennyson, Herbert Spencer, Canon Ainger, John Stuart Blackie, David Masson, Coventry Patmore, and other great men who used to sit round it at Macmillan's receptions.

The full story of Alexander Macmillan's career and literary friendships, which has been told in C. L. Graves's life of the publisher, forms a fitting complement to the *Memoir of Daniel Macmillan*, by Thomas Hughes. The starting of an American branch in 1869, and the purchase of Bentley's business in the 'nineties, helped both to strengthen the company's position and extend its field of operations.

When Kipling joined them with his tales, Macmillan's list already included illustrious names in all branches of English literature. In

Kipling's early days, as he has related in *My First Book*, printed in the *Idler* in December 1892, he was his own publisher, while also acting as sub-editor of the Indian newspaper in which his verses appeared. The poems came to be looked for regularly by readers of the journal in all parts of India. Some of them wrote suggesting that a book might be made of them. The office plant being at the author's disposal at a price, 'there was built a sort of book—a lean, oblong docket, wire-stitched, to imitate a D.O. Government envelope, printed on one side only, bound in brown paper, and secured with red tape. There was no discount, no reckoning twelves as thirteens, no commission, and no credit of any kind whatever. The money came back in poor but honest rupees, and was transferred from the publisher, the left-hand pocket, direct to the author, the right-hand pocket.' In a few weeks the first edition of *Departmental Ditties* was exhausted. Thereupon the author sold the book outright to Thacker, Spink and Company, of Calcutta, for five hundred rupees, as he wanted that amount to go on a shooting expedition. When he had made his name and some eight editions had been issued in Calcutta, it cost a great deal more than that to buy the copyright back.

It was a red-letter day for Methuen's when the *Barrack Room Ballads* fell into their hands and established them as the publishers of Kipling's verse. They were a young firm in those days, with offices in Bury Street, near the British Museum, founded in 1889 by a schoolmaster who, like Kipling, had previously dabbled in publishing with his own books. Algernon Methuen Marshall Stedman—to give him his original name in full—prepared more than a score of educational text-books in his younger days, while running his school at 'Highcroft', near Godalming. Many of his text-books are still in circulation. They were originally published by George Bell and Sons. It was the steady demand for them that gave him the idea of becoming his own publisher. The family name of Methuen was taken for the new firm in order to keep the founder's interests in Bury Street, where he placed a manager in charge, distinct from his activities as a schoolmaster.

The first 'Methuen' book was Edna Lyall's *Derrick Vaughan*; the second *Old Country Life*, by Baring Gould, many of whose later works bore the same imprint. Then came the Stedman text-books; and in 1892 the Kipling coup. Thenceforward, with the arrival of a new manager in G. E. Webster—and the amazing vogue of Marie

Corelli, whose stories were issued through the same astute and efficient hands—all went so well that the schoolmaster gave up teaching in order to concentrate on his flourishing business. Marie Corelli's first book, *A Romance of Two Worlds* (1886), and other early novels had been published by George Bentley. These were afterwards taken over by Methuen, who issued most of her later books. In 1894 the new firm moved to its present address in Essex Street; and by 1899 the founder had changed his name to Algernon Marshall Stedman Methuen in order to be more closely identified with it.

In 1894, when Methuen's moved to Essex Street, another significant newcomer of the 'nineties, John Lane, had already hung out his sign in Vigo Street. Bodley was chosen as his patron saint, he explained in his reprint of *The Life of Sir Thomas Bodley*, because he was not only 'the most pious of founders', but also 'one of the most notable worthies of Devon, my native county.' The sign itself, however, originated with Elkin Mathews, who issued a Bodley Head catalogue before he left his bookshop at Exeter to set up in business, at John Lane's instigation, at 6B Vigo Street. Lane, whose London career began with a clerkship at the Railway Clearing-House, was already an ardent collector of old furniture and bric-à-brac of all kinds. He brought the same enthusiasm to art and literature when he joined Elkin Mathews, soon overshadowing the elder partner with his larger ambitions and bolder activities. *The Book of the Rhymers' Club*, published in 1892, which Richard Le Gallienne, in his recollections of *The Romantic '90's*, describes as 'the first concerted attack of the "Bodley Head Poets" on the British public', bears the imprint of Elkin Mathews alone; but even in those days, when Mathews was the sole proprietor of the firm, Lane, according to the same authority, was its unseen *deus ex machina*. When the subsequent partnership was dissolved, he took the sign to the opposite side of the road, where he had chambers at the Albany.

It was not long before the 'Bodley Head' began to make a stir. Lane must have seen Aubrey Beardsley's remarkable illustrations to Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* in the edition which J. M. Dent was then issuing in monthly parts. He gave the young artist Oscar Wilde's *Salome* to illustrate for the edition which he brought out in 1894. In the same year he founded the *Yellow Book*, with Beardsley as its art editor, and Henry Harland as its literary chief.

Though always ready to exploit original and daring talent, the

publisher knew where to draw the line. 'Poor Lane', writes Richard Le Gallienne in *The Romantic '90's*, 'had a rather nerve-racking time with Beardsley, who, for the fun of it, was always trying to slip some indecency into his covers, not apparent without close scrutiny, so that Lane used to go over them with a microscope and submit them to a jury of his friends before he ventured to publish them.' In the following year Beardsley left the *Yellow Book*, which by that time no longer marked a movement, but had become 'little more than a publisher's magazine'. That at least was the opinion of Arthur Symons, who edited the rival production, the short-lived *Savoy*, started by Leonard Smithers in January 1896, with Beardsley as art editor. Besides the men already mentioned, Lane was associated with the first or early works of Lionel Johnson, Ernest Dowson, Lord Alfred Douglas, John Davidson, Francis Thompson, Max Beerbohm, George Moore, and others associated with the many-sided æsthetic movement of the 'nineties.

Other new publishers sprang up before the end of the century. In 1898, Gerald Duckworth, who had been with J. M. Dent, founded the firm of Duckworth and Company in Henrietta Street, not far from Dent's new home in Bedford Street. He started in partnership with another member of Dent's staff, A. R. Waller, a literary adviser of rare attainments, who subsequently became secretary to the Cambridge University Press and joint editor with Sir Adolphus Ward, Master of Peterhouse, of the *Cambridge History of English Literature*. Duckworth's published for Sir Leslie Stephen, the founder's stepfather, and other distinguished authors, developing a bent towards art, theology, and the drama. Michael Fairless's *Roadmender*, and W. H. Hudson's South American romances, gave them a leaning also towards works with a feeling for nature and the simple life. Their fiction and *belles lettres* in later years have ranged from Elinor Glyn to the Sitwells; their plays from Strindberg and Tchekoff to Alfred Sutro, Eden Phillpotts, and John Galsworthy. Ford Madox Hueffer, Hilaire Belloc, and Charles M. Doughty are other names associated with the firm. The last connexion, like so many other enduring episodes in the literary history of his time, was due to Edward Garnett's early recognition of Doughty's genius. When the first edition of *Arabia Deserta* was issued by the Cambridge University Press in 1888 Edward Garnett wrote an appreciation of the book in the *Academy*. His enthusiasm was unheeded. Nearly twenty years passed before the first small edition was exhausted.

Meanwhile Doughty, with the *Academy* article and his epic, *The Dawn of Britain*, in his hand, appeared one day at Duckworth's office, where Edward Garnett was then working. The result was that Duckworth's not only published *The Dawn of Britain*, but also the abridged edition of the earlier work, *Wanderings in Arabia*.¹ It was Edward Garnett's friendship with T. E. Lawrence that brought about the publication of *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*.

While the younger houses were thus advancing in the van of the new literary movements, some of the older firms were still leading the way in the main stream of English letters. The most public-spirited private enterprise of all, and the finest monument to his memory, was George Smith's *Dictionary of National Biography*. This princely undertaking was planned by the publisher and carried through to the end on a scale and with a completeness which he knew would cost a fortune and leave no hope of pecuniary reward. When the original work was completed in his lifetime, in the summer of 1900, the event was commemorated at several public banquets, and at a luncheon in the publisher's honour at the Mansion House, as well as at a small dinner party which Edward VII, then Prince of Wales, honoured by his presence. George Smith lived only a few months longer, dying in April of the following year at the age of seventy-seven.

¹ Gerald Duckworth died on 30th September 1937. The firm was then reorganised and maintains its high traditions at its old headquarters at Covent Garden.

THE NEW CENTURY

MORE vital to the trade than all the ephemeral fashions of the 'nineties was its acceptance at the close of the century of the 'net' system, thus at long last bringing something like order and discipline into its ranks. It was a grudging acceptance. Many publishers and booksellers were opposed to it, like such literary giants in the 'fifties as Dickens and Carlyle, who, as we have shown in an earlier chapter, were for 'absolute Free Trade' in all branches of bookselling. Free Trade was a fetish in the 'fifties. The very hint of any method not in strict accordance with its principles was sufficient for its damnation. The regulation of the price of books, wrote Sir Frederick Macmillan in his account of *The Net Book Agreement*—the achievement of which was mainly due to his exertions—had nothing to do with Free Trade; but that did not matter: 'it was only necessary to mention the blessed word "competition" and to suggest that if the retailer was free to sell at any price he liked instead of at a price fixed by the publisher . . . the principles of Free Trade would be vindicated.' So underselling was allowed to go on as before, with dire results to the trade as a whole. It became more and more difficult for booksellers to carry on unless they made literature a sort of side line to stationery and the like.

The remedy of the net system was first defined by Sir Frederick in a letter on the subject printed in the *Bookseller* in 1890. Though the general attitude towards co-operative action had changed considerably since the middle of the nineteenth century, when trade unions were illegal, the proposals met with widespread opposition. Sir Frederick's firm persevered, however, with an increasing number of their own books; and when Dent and other publishers gradually followed suit it became plain that the discount system, with all its attendant evils, was doomed.

The London Booksellers' Society, which had been formed in 1890, gave place a few years later to the more comprehensive body of Associated Booksellers of Great Britain and Ireland, which now called upon the publishers to enforce the new system by stringent regulations restricting the sale of new books to prices fixed by the

publishers. Thereupon the present Publishers' Association of Great Britain and Ireland was founded in 1896 to deal as a corporate body with all problems of the kind. Charles J. Longman, an ardent supporter of reform, was the Association's first president, and played a leading part in coping with the difficulties which had still to be overcome before the combined associations, in the spring of 1901, could commemorate the successful establishment of the Net Book Agreement, a covenant which has come to be regarded as the Magna Charta of the trade. Among the booksellers whose names should be remembered for their pioneer work in this connexion are Alderman Henry W. Keay of Eastbourne, the first, and for over twenty-five years the only, President of the Associated Booksellers,¹ Robert MacLehose, John Macniven, Thomas Burleigh, Robert Bowes, and Edwin Pearce.

The Longmans, in the meantime, had been living up to the great traditions of their past since Thomas Norton Longman succeeded his father, the fourth Thomas Longman, in 1879. Works by such scholars as Froude, Samuel Rawson Gardiner, Max Muller, Lecky, Stubbs, and Creighton; the acquisition of Rivington's old business; the Silver Library, with its hundreds of copyright volumes; the 'Badminton' series; Andrew Lang's *Fairy Tales*, and many other undertakings, went to prove that the oldest house in the trade was as vigorous as ever.

John Murray IV, another prime mover in the foundation of the Publishers' Association, and one of its early presidents, was equally progressive in his ideas, as well as faithful to the reputation won by the firm in the days of 'Glorious John'. The third John Murray would not publish fiction, but his son made a point of including in his lists a judicious selection of new novels. In this respect, as in the general 'get-up' of all his books, and the introduction of more up-to-date methods, John Murray IV infused the firm with a new spirit. In the ten years between 1898 and 1908 the business was doubled.

Sir Frederick Macmillan, who had done so much to bring the new agreement into being, was, appropriately, President of the Publishers' Association when it came into operation. He was again President in 1911-13, and was always one of the moving spirits in the trade. He was knighted by King Edward in 1909 for his services on behalf of the National Hospital for the Paralysed and Epileptic.

¹ Alderman Keay, after working untiringly in the best interests of the trade, died in 1938 at the age of ninety.

Macmillan's had meantime grown from strength to strength. Thomas Hardy, after publishing *The Woodlanders* and *Wessex Tales* with them in the 'eighties, voluntarily returned with all his works in the early twentieth century, when they issued *The Dynasts* and all his later books. Hugh Walpole, Sir James Frazer, 'Elizabeth', Rabindranath Tagore, Charles Morgan, and many more followed in later years.

William Heinemann, another warm supporter of the net book agreement, had meanwhile attained the height of his career. New names like William de Morgan, John Galsworthy, Somerset Maugham, John Masefield, Cunninghame Graham, and others, in addition to George Moore, Israel Zangwill, and Laurence Hope, were continually testifying to his ceaseless search for genius. He might have added the plays of Bernard Shaw, but Shaw's plays were then unacted, and the publisher declined them. Nobody, save amateur players, bought plays in those days, he declared, when G. B. S. called to propose their publication; and produced his ledger account of Pinero's works to show how entirely negligible was the interest then taken in such literature by the English public. That public had lost the habit of reading plays for half a century or more.

Bernard Shaw was hardened to publishers' refusals. The first of his novels, *Immaturity*, had been rejected long ago by George Meredith for Chapman and Hall, as well as by every other firm to which it was offered. In Dr. Henderson's life of Shaw we are told that 'even the rats were unable to devour it'. Half a century elapsed before it was eventually published (see p. 323). Though four of the five novels of his nonage found their way into print serially through the pages of various propagandist magazines which, as the author himself says, heralded the Socialist revival of the 'eighties, they came back persistently, like *Immaturity* and the unacted plays, from one publisher after another. 'Thus', he explains, 'between the old stool of my literary consciousness and the new stool of a view of life that did not reach publishing point until about ten years later, when Ibsen drove it in, my novels fell to the ground.' Shilling reprints of one of these, *Cashel Byron's Profession*, presently appeared in this country—following the stage productions of *Arms and the Man* and *The Devil's Disciple*—the revised edition of the same novel being issued by Grant Richards in the autumn of 1901.

Grant Richards, a nephew of Grant Allen, was assistant editor to

W. T. Stead on the *Review of Reviews* before making his name as a publisher with a flair for book production and a nose for new authors. He founded the World's Classics (now issued by the Oxford University Press) before Everyman's Library was started. Alfred Housman's *A Shropshire Lad* was one of his first books. He issued *Plays, Pleasant and Unpleasant*, shortly after setting up for himself in 1897, and for a time published nearly all Bernard Shaw's works. After many ups and downs he died at Monte Carlo early in 1948. The success of Shaw's plays, with their novel stage directions, created a fresh habit of play-reading; and the author lived to see Heinemann, who had declined them, 'actually writing plays for publication himself', as G. B. S. afterwards said, 'though he was too shy to publish them, as Grant Richards published his own novels.' Heinemann, he adds, in one of the passages quoted in Frederic Whyte's *Memoir*, 'came at a time when his big competitors . . . had buried the old rascals who built them up and fallen into the hands of men who were mostly only sons of their fathers. Among them W. H. shot to the top by simple gravitation just as Jonathan Cape would have done. It is not so easy nowadays for a man of his type because of big modernised American publishing, which is a different game.' Long before he wrote this, it may be added, Bernard Shaw had followed George Meredith to Constable's, who now publish all his works.

Heinemann, as already mentioned, was better at discovering new authors than in keeping them. H. G. Wells, four of whose earliest books he published, was another case in point. This may have been due to literary agents, whose increasing power he resented. They were continually poaching on his preserves, in his opinion, for the benefit of less enterprising firms, who preferred to deal with reputations already made rather than run the risk themselves of helping to make them. Fisher Unwin, Methuen, Harper's, and Macmillan's were also associated with H. G. Wells's early books. His later publishers are too numerous to count.

One author who remained faithful to Heinemann until his death was William de Morgan. Their association was among the happiest episodes in the life of each. The story of *Joseph Vance* and its acceptance in the summer of 1905 is worth re-telling. Written when the author was on the shady side of sixty, partly on torn envelopes and any odd scrap of paper which came to hand, it found its way in typescript to one publishing house only to be declined on the ground

that it was 'too long and too much in the round-about style fashionable in Thackeray's time.' Next it was submitted to Henry Lawrence, of Lawrence and Bullen, whose enthusiasm for the tale was immense. Though the book was beyond the resources of his own firm, he staggered with the heavy load round to his friend Heinemann, who, undaunted by its length, soon made up his mind to publish it. The decision proved one of the most profitable in his career, leading as it did to the triumph not only of *Joseph Vance* but of all De Morgan's later novels.

Four years later came another stroke of luck, the publication of *The Dop Doctor*, by Miss Clothilde Graves, who, although she had already made her reputation as an author under her own name, insisted on a pen-name for the book in the writing of which she declared that she had filled her fountain-pen from 'the veins of her heart'. The book appeared in April 1910, and no novel that Heinemann ever published attained a more remarkable success. The association thus begun between 'Richard Dehan' and her publisher remained unbroken until Heinemann's death in 1920.

Shortly after publishing *The Dop Doctor*, Heinemann was introduced to Dr. James Loeb in Paris through Salomon Reinach, with whose *Apollo* he had inaugurated his international 'Ars Una' series. It was Reinach who suggested to Loeb—a man of means as well as a scholar—the idea of founding the classical library which bears his name: a series which, with the original texts and sound translations printed side by side, has thrown open the classics to democracy and given a new life to a host of minor works, as well as the masterpieces. Loeb found in Heinemann the very publisher he needed, keen, business-like, and intelligent.

About the time that Heinemann was in Paris for his introduction to Dr. Loeb, another English publisher met his death in the Seine at Melun: Alfred Trübner Nutt, who 'discovered' Henley. In May 1910 Alfred Nutt was at Melun with his invalid son, whose carriage somehow slipped into the river, and was swept away. His father sprang to the rescue, and was drowned. The son was saved. Alfred Nutt was an accomplished and widely read man. Like Nicholas Trübner, whose friendship with his father, David Nutt—founder of the bookselling business in 1829—was commemorated in his second Christian name, he was a publisher whose books reflected his scholarly tastes, and was something of an author as well. He was in the van of the Celtic revival; originator of the movement which

led to the formation of the Irish Texts Society; founder of the English Goethe Society; and past-president of the Folk-lore Society, all the publications of which he issued through his house. It was at his repeated request that W. E. Henley rearranged his scattered verse for publication after they had been rejected by nearly every other publisher of standing in London. The library edition of Henley's collected works (1908), and the Tudor Translations, which he edited, remain the worthiest memorials of their friendship.

Just a year after Alfred Nutt—in 1911—died another publisher whose not uneventful career is in danger of being forgotten. This was Elliot Stock, whose shop in Paternoster Row was the resort of several generations of ministers and laymen, particularly those interested, like himself, in antiquarian and bibliographical works. Among other periodicals, he founded the *Antiquary* and *Book Prices Current*, as well as the *Baptist*. It was largely through his insistence that Augustine Birrell made the first selection of his literary essays. *Obiter Dicta*, the fame of which was at once established by a glowing appreciation in *The Times*, was Elliot Stock's outstanding success as a publisher. He himself wrote a book of neatly turned verse, entitled *A Publisher's Playground*, which appeared through Kegan Paul. Some years before his death, in his seventy-fourth year, he retired owing to failing health, selling his business to Robert Scott.

In the following November the death of James Tait Black closed a chapter in the history of one of the older publishing houses, and led to one of our few literary foundations. The James Tait Black Literary Prizes, for the best memoir and the best novel of each year, are awarded out of the income derived from the considerable sum bequeathed for that purpose by the late Mrs. Black in memory of her husband. Under the terms of the bequest the prizes are awarded by the Professor of Literature in the University of Edinburgh, or failing him, the Professor of Literature at Glasgow University.

To pick up the threads of A. and C. Black's history, we must hark back to the founder's retirement in 1870. Adam Black withdrew largely owing to his disapproval of what he deemed the extravagant plans then being made for the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, the copyright of which had been the property of the firm since he purchased it at the time of Archibald Constable's failure. When he retired he handed on the business over which he had ruled for so long to three of his sons, James, Francis, and Adam, who remained as joint partners for many years. In spite of their

father's fears they proved that the *Encyclopædia Britannica* was still one of the most profitable assets of the firm, nearly half a million sets being ultimately sold of the ninth edition, which appeared in twenty-four volumes between 1875 and 1889. This total, which includes American pirated and mutilated editions, is vouched for in the prefatory note to the eleventh edition.¹ James Tait Black, the last survivor of the founder's sons, had himself retired in 1899, the control of the firm thenceforward passing to his nephew, Mr. Adam Black, a grandson of the founder.

Unlike the majority of other historic houses north of the Tweed, Black's had now concentrated their activities in London. Here, in the oasis of Soho Square which lies between Oxford Street and Shaftesbury Avenue, they became a limited liability company. In the early years of the present century, the firm started the vogue of the colour-book with *War Impressions* of the South African Campaign, illustrated by Mortimer Menpes. This first application of the three-colour process to bookwork was followed by whole series of similar productions and set a fashion which, though in due course robbed of its supremacy by the revival of the woodcut, has endured to the present day.

Since they came to Soho Square from Edinburgh, A. and C. Black have also consolidated their position in the educational world by the issue of many standard text-books, and in general literature by such undertakings as Sir Walter Besant's *Monumental Survey of London*, the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, *Who's Who*, and guide books and companionable books to all parts of the globe. In 1930 they absorbed the business of S. W. Partridge and Co., a firm founded in 1850, and well known for its juvenile publications.

¹ The *Encyclopædia Britannica* was subsequently bought by Horace E. Hooper who, in partnership with Walter Jackson, had built up a large business as book salesmen in the United States by bold and original methods. The tenth edition, issued by arrangement through *The Times*, consisted of a reissue of the ninth, with eleven supplementary volumes, bringing the work up to 1902. Three years later, at Hooper's suggestion, *The Times Book Club* was founded. In the meantime Hooper was preparing the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopædia* under the editorship of Hugh Chisholm. This was published in 1910 under arrangement with the Cambridge University Press. After the first World War three supplementary volumes were prepared under the same editorship, these being chiefly concerned with that world-wide upheaval and constituting the twelfth edition. They were published in 1922—the year in which Hooper died. The next supplement—three volumes covering the period 1920-21—forming the thirteenth edition, followed in 1926 under the chief editorship of J. L. Garvin. Then came the 'new model', the fourteenth edition in twenty-four volumes, with Garvin again as editor-in-chief, and published by the Encyclopædia Company Limited in 1929. The complete property rights of the *Encyclopædia* were acquired during the second World War by the University of Chicago.

Twelve months after the death of James Tait Black, died another of the Scottish fathers of the publishing world—the third William Blackwood, upon whom the control of affairs had devolved since the death of his uncle, John Blackwood, in 1879. His father, Major William Blackwood, had been an officer in the East India Company's service before he became a partner, thus introducing the military element which, as mentioned on an earlier page, has ever since been strongly represented in Blackwood's lists. Though they had their London office, Blackwood's headquarters remained in Edinburgh. A. and C. Black pulled up their roots in that city when they moved to London in 1890, but with the houses of Blackwood, Nelson, Chambers, and other publishers like Oliver and Boyd, and T. and T. Clark—centenarians all—as well as some of the best printers of the day, Edinburgh could still boast that in proportion to its size it remained the busiest printing centre in the kingdom.

Some great names were added to the 'Military Staff' during the third William Blackwood's reign, including General Hamley, Lord Kitchener, and Lord Lugard, not to mention such war correspondents as G. W. Steevens and Lionel James. Besides continuing head of the house for some thirty-three years, William Blackwood edited *Maga*, which continues to this day the heart and soul of the business, and the medium through which many modern reputations have been made. When he died, the *doyen* of the trade, he was succeeded by his nephews, George William Blackwood, who took over the editorship of the magazine, and James Blackwood, who served as President of the Publishers' Association in 1913-15. The sons of Captain George Blackwood, who was killed at Maiwand in 1880, they had already been active partners in the firm for a considerable number of years.

William Blackwood's death brings us almost to the eve of the first World War, the outbreak of which shook the book trade to its foundations. The finest exhibition of books and printing ever held in any country had just been opened at Leipzig, a city whose place as the book mart of the world, and in the vexed relations between publishers and authors, as Lord Morley says in his *Recollections*, has had 'no mean significance in Europe'. Some of England's rarest treasures had been included by our booksellers and publishers in the rich collection of Shakespearean and other priceless exhibits sent on that occasion under the auspices of the British Government. There was no time to rescue these before the outbreak of hostilities,

and alarmist rumours were soon being circulated regarding their fate. The truth was that the British commission just had time before their hurried departure to see the exhibits safely deposited in the vaults of the Buchhändler Haus. Here they remained in safe custody until the end of the struggle, when every exhibit was returned to its owner unharmed.

After the first bewildering shock, booksellers and publishers alike quickly adjusted their outlook. The younger generation flocked to the colours; the older men carried on as well as they could. The month of September, which opened the chief publishing season of the year, brought only 853 new books as compared with 1203 in 1913. By the end of 1914, however, the trade had so far recovered that the total number of new books in that broken year proved to be only some six hundred or so less than in the previous twelve months—8863 as compared with 9541. It was in the later stages of the War that the trade suffered most: not through any decline in the demand for books and more books, but rather through the increasing scarcity of paper and the shortage of labour. The influence of these handicaps is reflected in the following table of figures for the War years compiled from the annual statistics printed in the *Publishers' Circular*:

		New Books.		New Editions		Totals.
1914	.	8863	.	2674	.	11,537
1915	.	8499	.	2166	.	10,665
1916	.	7537	.	1612	.	9149
1917	.	6606	.	1525	.	8131
1918	.	6750	.	966	.	7716

As the totals diminished so the costs of production increased, with the inevitable result that books, like every other commodity, became gradually dearer. New novels went up first to 6s. net—the 6s. novel had previously been sold to the public at 4s. 6d.—and then to 7s. 6d. net. The sevenpenny and shilling cloth-bound reprint, which had captured the market in the spring of 1914, vanished. Popular series like Everyman's Library and the World's Classics rose by degrees from one shilling to two shillings a volume. The cheapest books naturally suffered more in proportion than the costlier works. In these the increase varied considerably, but rarely did it justify the complaint that books were becoming too dear, if the higher costs of production were taken into account.

The paper famine, though not so acute as that which led to such disastrous results under governmental control in the Second World War, was serious enough, restriction by mills and merchants and inflation of prices producing in effect many of the evils of rationing. There were other difficulties. Just as books shipped from Scotland for London in the days of the American Revolution were liable to be sunk by Paul Jones with his privateers, so did similar cargoes now have to run the gauntlet of the German submarines. More than one valuable shipload met its fate that way. Others were sent to the bottom of the Atlantic while crossing from the United States.

Books were not too safe even in the heart of the Empire. Many of the publishing offices were in the direct line of the German air raiders as they swept over the City of London. Not a few bombs burst within a stone's throw of Stationers' Hall and Paternoster Row. In the publishing offices of the Cambridge University Press, then in Fetter Lane, a grim trophy was preserved bearing the inscription: 'Tail vane of a bomb which was dropped by a German Raider on this building, but failed to explode, 17th February 1918.' The damage done to the book trade by German bombs in 1914-18, however, was infinitesimal when compared with the havoc wrought during the second World War. As the earlier struggle dragged on the printing and publishing businesses both of Oxford and Cambridge, as with other concerns, suffered increasingly from shortage of metal and paper, as well as of personnel. In his introduction to the *Oxford University Roll of Service*, Sir Walter Raleigh wrote: 'The Clarendon Press, though deprived of the services of virtually all its men of military age, was active in the production of books and pamphlets, most of them written by Oxford men setting forth the causes and issues of the War—a mine of information, and an armoury of apologetics.' The collection of Oxford essays in *Why We are at War: Great Britain's Case*, issued in September 1914, ran through twelve impressions as fast as it could be printed. The profits were given to the Belgian Relief Fund.

The series of Oxford pamphlets on war topics, which followed under the editorship of H. W. C. Davis, was so successful that more than half a million copies were quickly sold all over the world. Many unusual works were turned into official text-books. According to Colonel Lawrence, who wrote the introduction to the full reprint of *Arabia Deserta*, published by Jonathan Cape and the

Medici Society in 1921, Doughty's classic work became a 'military text-book, and helped to guide us to victory in the East'. In his first series of literary criticisms and appreciations, entitled *Friday Nights*, Edward Garnett tells us that shortly before the campaign in Arabia was ended the War Office was on the point of reprinting 'this king book among travels' as indispensable for officers.

The urgent need of books for the fighting forces was anticipated in this country by Mrs. H. M. Gaskell, daughter of Canon Melville, of Worcester Cathedral, who inaugurated the British War Library immediately after the outbreak of hostilities. Receiving official sanction, and the loan of Surrey House, Marble Arch, from Lady Battersea, the first appeal to the public brought a tidal wave of literature which for a time almost overwhelmed the organisers. The work expanded with the development of the War. The literary needs of the Navy were added to those of the Army. Assistance presently came through the Camps Library movement started by Sir Edward Ward and Dame Eva Anstruther at the beginning of October 1914. The Camps Library, by arrangement, undertook to look after the literary needs of the fighting forces, while the War Library supplied books to the sick and wounded in all the theatres of war. Other organisations helped—the Y.M.C.A., the Camp Education Department formed by Sir Alfred T. Davies for supplying instructive books to British prisoners of war; and similar schemes. *The Times* helped in this good work by selections of English literature, printed on single pages of thin paper, suitable for inclusion in a letter. These were afterwards collected in the *Book of Broad-sheets*, two volumes of which were issued by Methuen, with an introduction by Geoffrey Dawson, then editor of *The Times*.

One of the most promising British publishers who lost his life was Captain T. A. Nelson, who was killed in 1917. He had been captain of the Oxford Fifteen in 1900, as well as a Scottish international; and as a young partner in the publishing house which bore his name had helped to make that firm one of the largest organisations of the kind in existence. R. C. Jackson, like Rupert Brooke, the publication of whose poems he had shared with Frank Sidgwick, also fell. The houses of Longmans and Blackie each gave a son. Colonel P. H. Dalbiac,¹ sometime Conservative M.P. for North Camberwell, who became a director of Allen and Unwin's in

¹ Colonel Dalbiac, who was also known for his dictionaries of quotations—English, French, German, and Italian—died in 1927.

1914, when that company took over the firm of Swan Sonnenschein and Company, in which he had been a partner for many years, not only lost one of his sons, but went himself, serving in France and Salonika in 1916-17 with the 60th Divisional Train, which he raised and commanded in 1914.

The files of the *Publishers' Circular* abound in such references, including the loss of two of the editor's own sons, A. B. Marston and Preston Marston, the two youngest members of the *P.C.* staff. J. M. Dent also lost two of his sons. How bravely he bore this double blow may be read in his *Memoirs*, edited by his eldest son and successor, Hugh R. Dent. The founder of the firm, in the meantime, had not only made a world-wide success of his Everyman's Library—edited from its inception by Ernest Rhys—but also added Joseph Conrad and many other eminent names to his list; besides launching such additional series as the *Collection Gallia* in French and the Wayfarers' Library in English. He had also built the new Aldine House, at the corner of Bedford Street, which has since remained the imposing headquarters of the firm. In 1926 his eldest son was able to purchase the freehold of this property. He relates how delighted his father was 'to know that the building to which he had given so much care and thought was at last entirely our own.' Hugh himself died in 1938, when he was succeeded as Chairman by W. G. Taylor, who was President of the Publishers' Association during 1935-7. Before his death Hugh provided a fund for an annual J. M. Dent Memorial Lecture on Book Production and Bookselling, a list of which is included in our bibliography.

Death was busy among the publishers during the War years of 1914-18. Reginald Smith, K.C., head of Smith, Elder and Company, came to his tragic end at the close of 1916. As President of the Publishers' Association since the spring of 1915 he strove with all his high-minded zeal to co-ordinate effort in the book trade throughout that troubled period. The news of his death brought a sense of personal sorrow to a host of literary friends and fellow-workers. As a publisher he made a point of knowing all his authors, as well as almost every contributor to the *Cornhill*, of which he had been editor since 1897, six years before succeeding his father-in-law as head of Smith, Elder's. He had joined that firm in 1894, the year in which he also became a Q.C.; and after George Smith's death very successfully and worthily upheld the great traditions of the house.

Probably few publishers ever enjoyed a closer personal friendship with his authors, including among others, Mrs. Humphry Ward, whose *Robert Elsmere* took the English-speaking world by storm when Smith, Elder published it in 1888; Stanley Weyman, Henry Seton Merriman, A. E. W. Mason, Robert Bridges, A. C. Benson, who had been Smith's fag at Eton; Conan Doyle, Mrs. de la Pasture (Lady Clifford), and Captain Scott.

'That's all very well for me', declared Scott when terms for his book were offered by Reginald Smith, 'but where do you come in?' The publisher's high ideals, no less than his generosity, led to something far deeper than ordinary business relationship in this case, as in many others. When Scott sailed on his last voyage it was to Reginald Smith's hands that he entrusted his affairs. English publishers, by the way, have played no inconsiderable part in the encouragement of modern Polar expeditions. Constable's £10,000 for Nansen's *Farthest North* has already been mentioned. Shackleton was greatly heartened by Heinemann, whose simultaneous publication of that explorer's book, *The Heart of the Antarctic*, in nine different European countries in 1910, was a feat of organisation of which he had every reason to be proud. He continued his active interest in succeeding ventures, Sir Douglas Mawson testifying to the fact that his personal co-operation was one of the factors that carried the Australasian Antarctic Expedition on to success.

Reginald Smith's death closed the last chapter in the history of a firm which, as traced in our earlier pages, had been founded in Fenchurch Street just a hundred years before. The business fell into worthy hands, being acquired by John Murray IV, who thus added the *Cornhill* to the *Quarterly*, and many popular and standard works—notably in fiction—to his own list. The great *Dictionary of National Biography*, the first two supplements and the epitome to which had been added in Reginald Smith's time, was offered—with the responsibility of maintenance—to the Oxford University Press, and gratefully accepted.

Another notable figure passed away towards the close of 1914 in Bertram Dobell, whose two bookshops in Charing Cross Road were known to collectors from all parts of the country. The story of Dobell's life is one of the romances of the book trade. An ardent bibliophile even in the days when he was a grocer's assistant, collecting his treasures from the penny and twopenny boxes of the bookstalls, he had a genius for discovering new and neglected poets.

His greatest achievement was his recovery and identification of the works of Thomas Traherne, the manuscript of which had been picked up originally for a song. Having edited these works he published them in 1906-8, and subsequently performed a similar service for another forgotten poet of the seventeenth century, William Strode. A poet himself, he also proved a friend in need to James Thomson, author of *The City of Dreadful Night*, in his last unhappy years. Bertram Dobell was seventy-three at the time of his own death in December 1914, when his business passed to his sons.

In the last year of the War of 1914-18 there also died, almost unnoticed, Alexander Strahan—barely more than a name in the twentieth century, but, as we have seen, a publisher of no little influence in mid-Victorian days. Before the end of 1918 another link with the mid-Victorian age disappeared with the death of William Ellerby Green, who, in point of years and length of partnership, had been the senior member of Longmans, Green and Company since the death of the fourth Thomas Longman in 1879. His father had been a partner in the firm from 1824 to 1865, and was still in Paternoster Row when his son joined him there, in the middle of the great Macaulay epoch.

Just after the close of the first World War, John Alexander Blackie, whose only son had been killed at the Front, died at the age of sixty-eight. He was the elder son of Dr. W. G. Blackie, last of the three brothers who, as already stated, had taken an active part in the management of the publishing business founded by their father in 1809. He was succeeded as head of the house by his younger brother, Walter W. Blackie, whose only son had also served in the War, but happily survived to join his father on the board. Though the firm had been formed into a private limited company in 1885, it had remained, like the Murrays, Blackwoods, Macmillans, and others, essentially a family concern, the managing director at the present day being F. F. P. Bisacre, W. W. Blackie's son-in-law. Through successive generations the firm grew to a position of enviable influence and prosperity. The character of its publications has changed with the times, but books of reference, technical works, and educational books, have continued among its leading features. And with the tales of Henty, Manville Fenn, Colonel Brereton, Rear-Admiral Jeans, and many others in whose works succeeding generations of young readers have delighted, the reputation of the house for Christmas books became second to none. Though the

headquarters are still in Glasgow, the centre of distribution remained at 50 Old Bailey until the Luftwaffe destroyed it in the six years' war.

The first World War had been over little more than two years when William Heinemann passed away. He had long been in failing health, and threatened with blindness; but the tragedy of the War, according to Miss Tennyson Jesse, then his principal reader—in the personal tribute which she contributed to the *Memoir* by Frederic Whyte—was the worst thing that ever happened to him. With all the conflicting emotions due to his loyalty to England, his German blood, and his thoroughly cosmopolitan outlook, he was one of the people whom the War made 'perfectly miserable and ill.' Having no son of his own he had taken his favourite nephew, Jack Heinemann, of Balliol, into the firm, in the hope that one day he would succeed him. Young Heinemann, however, fell early in the War, and his death was a crushing blow to the publisher. His business was subsequently acquired by the American house of Doubleday, Page and Company, and continued its prosperous career as an English company under the old name, with Heinemann's associates in charge, Theodore Byard as chairman, and C. S. Evans as managing director. J. B. Priestley's *Good Companions* and its successor, *Angel Pavement*, like John Galsworthy's *Forsyte Saga*, and the collected works of James Elroy Flecker, Max Beerbohm, Maurice Baring, and John Masefield, as well as the essays of J. C. Squire, and novels by writers like Francis Brett Young, Mary Borden, Edna Ferber, Margaret Kennedy and Joseph Hergersheimer, added fresh laurels to the Heinemann list in the years between the two great wars.

THE NINETEEN-TWENTIES

A WHOLE group of prominent figures in modern publishing disappeared in the nineteen-twenties. Sir Algernon Methuen, who founded his firm six months before William Heinemann, survived him by some four years and left a much larger fortune. In his *Memoir of Heinemann*, Frederic Whyte draws a contrast between the two men—‘the quiet, reserved, steady-going, astute scholar, endowed with a most unscholarly gift for amassing wealth (£250,000 in less than thirty years), and the brilliant, temperamental, hot-blooded pioneer, all vivacity and enthusiasm, for whom, as Miss Tennyson Jesse has so well and so truly said, “the dream was more than the business”’.¹ The comparison is not inapt, but the number of years should have been given as rather more than thirty-five years instead of less than thirty. Heinemann, it may be added, left estate of the gross value of £33,780. Sir Algernon Methuen—he received his baronetcy in 1916—had extended his publishing business into every department of letters until it became one of the leading as well as one of the best organised firms in the trade. What he owed to ‘one of the most loyal staffs that any employer can ever have had around him’,² he acknowledged in a most practical way in his will.

Our record is still one of loss; but an obituary notice helps us occasionally to turn back. Mention should already have been made of A. H. Bullen, whose death on 29th February 1920 preceded those of William Heinemann and Sir Algernon Methuen. A son of the Dr. George Bullen who was Keeper of Printed Books at the British Museum for many years, A. H. Bullen was an eminent Elizabethan scholar long before he became a partner in the publishing firm of Lawrence and Bullen. His collection of old English plays, and his editions of such dramatists as John Day and Marlowe, issued by John Nimmo, remain among the highly prized treasures of the bibliophile. His rediscovery of Thomas Campion, whose works he privately printed at the Chiswick Press in 1889, was on a par with

¹ *Dictionary of National Biography*, Supplementary Volume, 1927.

² *Sir Algernon Methuen, Baronet: A Memoir*. Privately printed, 1925.

Bertram Dobell's subsequent recovery of those other seventeenth-century poets, Traherne and Strode. Bullen published first in London in partnership with Henry W. Lawrence, afterwards associated with the Medici Society; and then with Frank Sidgwick, later senior director of Sidgwick and Jackson. In 1904 he founded the Shakespeare Head Press at Stratford-on-Avon—next door but one to the poet's own house at New Place—realising one of the dreams of his life in issuing thence, during the next three years, the ten volumes of his *Stratford Town Shakespeare*. Other finely printed books of scholarly interest followed in limited editions from the same source before his death in 1920.

The early part of 1925 witnessed the death of another publisher who made his mark in the 'nineties—John Lane, some six months after the death of Sir Algernon Methuen. Lane had continued his search for original work both in art and letters down to the end. Kenneth Grahame, Arnold Bennett and G. K. Chesterton—each of whom appeared also in Methuen's list—published some of their early works at the Bodley Head. Arnold Bennett and G. K. C., it may be added, like H. G. Wells and Hilaire Belloc issued books with so many publishers that it would need a whole chapter to trace all their wanderings. W. J. Locke found his way to the Bodley Head and stayed there until his death in 1930. No reference to Lane's later activities would be complete without some reference to his association with Anatole France. The Bodley Head translations testify to his admiration for an author whose works he did more than anyone to bring to the notice of the English-speaking public.

Another notable figure vanished in 1926—Edward Bell, head of George Bell and Sons, who, born in 1844, five years before J. M. Dent, lived to succeed W. E. Green as the *doyen* of English publishers. His father, George Bell, whose partnership with F. R. Daldy was dissolved in 1872—eight years after they had succeeded Bohn at his York Street address—died in 1890; and the business had made great strides under the management of his two sons, Edward and his younger brother Ernest Bell, both M.A.'s of Cambridge. In due course the firm had moved from its cramped and rather dingy quarters in York Street, Covent Garden (De Quincey's old home) to the fine building known as York House, Portugal Street. Edward Bell had always taken a keen personal interest in art, architecture and archæology, and the firm's activities reflected this, besides main-

taining the old reputation which it had gained in scholarship and letters. One of the leading spirits of the Publishers' Association from its inception he was president of that body in the difficult years of 1906-1908, during what became known as the 'Book War'. This was the sequel to the opening in the autumn of 1905 of *The Times* Book Club, an enterprise which led to a dispute with the trade into the ramifications of which it is needless now to enter. Suffice it to say that it was in no small measure due to Edward Bell's tact and moderation that the difficulties were removed and peaceful relations restored between the parties concerned. To-day *The Times* Book Club, to quote from Arthur Waugh's centenary history of Chapman and Hall, 'is firmly established as one of the most valued and valuable of the publishers' clients.'

A much younger man than Edward Bell, Sir (John) Ernest Hodder-Williams, head of Hodder and Stoughton's, died during 1927. The grandson of Matthew Hodder, and born in 1876, Ernest Hodder-William was endowed with a shrewd instinct for publishing. His grandfather died in 1911, and when the surviving senior partner, T. W. Stoughton, followed in 1917, he became head of the house. Like Sir William Robertson Nicoll, whose arrival from Scotland to become literary adviser and editor-in-chief had marked the turning point in an earlier phase of the firm's development, he held that the true policy of a publishing house was extension in all directions. Under his stimulating leadership remarkable progress was made. One of his luckiest ventures was *If Winter Comes*, by A. S. M. Hutchinson. To-day Hodder and Stoughton's list includes standard works in every branch of English letters, fiction, biography, and religion perhaps predominating. Sir Ernest left as the surviving partners his two brothers, Robert Percy Hodder-Williams, who had been associated with him for many years, and Ralph Hodder-Williams, formerly a professor at Toronto University, who served during the War in Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, his *History* of which was issued by the firm.

The last publisher of note to pass away in the nineteen-twenties was Sir John Murray, fourth head of the firm which had maintained the highest traditions of the trade for upwards of a century and a half. The range of the Albemarle Street house had been considerably widened under Sir John's energetic rule, especially since the acquisition of the business of Smith, Elder on the death of Reginald Smith. He had been created C.V.O. in 1913 and

promoted to K.C.V.O. in 1926. Like his father, Sir John was something of an author, as well as a publisher. He edited Gibbon's Autobiography and Byron's Correspondence, and in 1920 wrote a short Memoir of his father. In the *Quarterly Review*, which has survived the older *Edinburgh*,¹ he always took the closest interest, acting as editor for a brief period after the death of Sir W. Smith. He was associated in the editorship with the late C. E. Lawrence. Intimately connected with every movement that concerned the well-being of his craft, Sir John, who died in November 1928, will be remembered as a man of many interests and the soul of honour. He was succeeded by his only son, John the fifth, a member of the firm before serving through the first World War, who returned to Albemarle Street with the rank of lieutenant-colonel and the D.S.O. Colonel Murray, who received the K.C.V.O. in 1932, succeeded also to the editorship of the *Quarterly*. John Grey Murray is now a member of the firm.

W. M. Meredith, who had presided over the Publishers' Association during the last eighteen months of the War, was again elected president in 1927. Ill-health unfortunately prevented him from completing his second term of office, and also caused his retirement from Constable's. His earlier training as an engineer enabled the publishers to create a sound department in engineering and scientific literature. Mr. Kyllmann had remained at the head of affairs since the days when, with Nansen, Meredith and Bernard Shaw among its authors, the firm first took its place in the front rank of publishers, ably seconded in more recent years by Michael Sadleir, son of Sir Michael Sadler, Master of University College, Oxford, from 1923 to 1934, who died in 1943. Michael Sadleir, by the way, added the 'i' to his name as an author to prevent any possibility of confusion with his father's works. As a publisher with exceptional literary gifts, and an author with emphatic views on the bookselling side, as well as a bibliographer devoted to the great Victorians and nineteenth-century book-building, he has established a place of his own in literary and bookselling circles. He first joined Constable's in an editorial capacity in 1912, and after the War and the Peace Conference—which he attended as a member of the British Delegation—returned to the publishers as a director, taking with him as an outcome of his work on the League of Nations Secretariat, the English agency for the League's official publications. That was in

¹ The *Edinburgh Review* came to an end with the last issue for 1929.

1920.¹ He has since revealed himself as an enthusiastic Trollopian as well as a biographer of a very high order with his *Trollope: A Commentary*; made various excursions into Victorian bibliography, including the series of studies in book history and book structure which he inaugurated in 1930 with his survey of *The Evolution of Publishers' Binding Styles, 1770-1900*; and shot to the front as a best-seller in 1940 with *Fanny by Gaslight*, after building up his reputation as a novelist with that *confessio amantis*, *These Foolish Things*, and three earlier tales. *Fanny by Gaslight* was followed three years later by that other realistic story of the London of the 1870's, *Forlorn Sunset*.

Bernard Shaw, it is worth noting, maintained his connexion with Constable's through all the years since we last had occasion to refer to his books. After his early experiences with the novels of his nonage it was doubtless a relief to settle down permanently with all his literary eggs in one satisfying basket. The irony of fate has added to the collection the very first novel of all, *Immaturity*, once rejected for Chapman and Hall by George Meredith, and now at long last published side by side with Meredith's own works. Other distinguished authors had been added to Constable's list in the meantime, among them Lord Grey, with his *Fallodon Papers*; Charles Whibley, with his second series of Tudor Translations; Professor Basil Williams, with the Makers of the Nineteenth Century Library; Sir Flinders Petrie, Logan Pearsall Smith, Havelock Ellis, Gordon Bottomley, Walter de la Mare, Katherine Mansfield, Harold Nicolson, Dr. Santayana and Theodore Dreiser.

With the reaction which followed the Peace of 1918 the demand for War books subsided. A disillusioned world sought to heal its wounds and readjust its outlook. The new generation searched for a more reliable assessment of life and its meaning; for the revolutionary discoveries of science as well as the War itself had materially altered the older conception of the universe. Booksellers found it necessary to stock books for the plain man, as well as for the student, embracing every branch of this new knowledge. The success of Robert Bridges's great philosophical poem, *The Testament of Beauty*, which came from the Oxford University Press in 1929—and placed a Poet Laureate, for the first time for generations, among the 'best sellers' of his day—was more a token of gratitude for a gift attuned to the spiritual needs of the time than a sign of any popular en-

¹ The agency for the League of Nations publications was taken over in 1930 by Allen and Unwin.

thusiasm for poetry. The revival of interest in verse which had been marked during the War had survived; contemporary dramatists and poets—those at least with any distinctive notes—were no longer a drug on the market; but there was nothing to compare with the supremacy of the poet of a hundred years or so before, when copies of *Childe Harold*, for instance, had to be served through the windows of John Murray's shop in Albemarle Street—there being no room in the doorway, so great was the rush for the third and fourth cantos of that poem.

The vogue of a book is one of the unknown factors which invest publishing with the gambling element that appeals to most men. Fashions come and go; literary 'booms' are created when least expected; and the publishers and authors concerned, though a good deal richer, as often as not are none the wiser. The sudden revival of the War book, ten years after its first popularity had vanished, took the book trade completely by surprise in this country. In that case, however, the course could afterwards be traced. Arnold Zweig's *Sergeant Grischa* (Martin Secker), followed by Edmund Blunden's more delicate and enduring record in prose and verse, *Undertones of War* (Cobden-Sanderson), heralded the revival in 1928. An impetus was given to the movement in the following spring by Winston Churchill's *Aftermath*, in his 'World Crisis' series (Thornton Butterworth); so that when Putnam's shortly afterwards published the English edition of Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* they found a public eager to read any book that so vividly brought home the grim realities of modern warfare. Among the most popular of the later books on the War written from the English point of view were R. C. Sherriff's *Journey's End*, published by Victor Gollancz both in its original form as a play and subsequently as a novel; and Robert Graves's autobiographical *Good-bye to All That*, of which Jonathan Cape sold some 30,000 copies within the first few weeks of its publication.

The names of some of the younger publishers are prominent in these and other activities. It was in the nature of things that books reflecting the spirit of the age should come from the new generation, led by men like Jonathan Cape, Stanley Unwin, Victor Gollancz, and Geoffrey Faber. Most of the publishers who then made their mark, however, learned their craft with the older firms. If our history has taught us anything it is that the publishing house of one generation is the nursery of another.

Jonathan Cape, for example, gained his practical experience first at Hatchard's, then with Harper and Brothers, and afterwards with Duckworth and Company, before developing his own flair for publishing by founding, in 1921, the firm which bears his name. This was in partnership with George Wren Howard, who has been responsible for the high standard of craftsmanship which has become the hall-mark of a Cape book in all branches of letters. One of the most ambitious of their early ventures, the complete edition of Doughty's *Arabia Deserta*, brought him in touch with Colonel T. E. Lawrence, who wrote the introduction to that reprint. Cape subsequently published Lawrence's own epic of adventure, *Revolt in the Desert*, abridged from the full-length and privately printed *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (1926), as well as Lawrence's Letters. After Lawrence's death in 1935, Cape printed *Seven Pillars* for general circulation unabridged.

Mary Webb, whose *Precious Bane*, published by Cape in 1924, became a best-seller four years after publication through the personal tribute of a Prime Minister at the Royal Literary Fund Banquet, also found a home for all her books at Thirty Bedford Square—too late, alas! for her own lifetime. In the same way the Shrewsbury edition of the works of Samuel Butler assured the author of *Erewhon* of a worthy resting place in the same house. W. H. Davies, Laurence and A. E. Housman, J. Middleton Murry, Hugh Lofting, Arthur Ransome, Douglas Reed, Peter Fleming, A. E. Coppard, Elizabeth Bowen, H. E. Bates, William Plomer, E. H. Young, Eric Linklater, C. V. Wedgwood, James Bone—with his artist brother Muirhead—are but a few of the other names of English authors associated with the same imprint.

The Travellers' Library gave a fresh lease of life to many a good book in a neat and comely form, and led to not a few similar series elsewhere. Cape's activities across the Atlantic included a branch publishing house in Toronto. As the English publisher for Sinclair Lewis, Eugene O'Neill, Dorothy Canfield, Fannie Hurst, Elizabeth Madox Roberts, Sherwood Anderson, Ernest Hemingway, and other American authors, besides issuing the Library Edition of Herman Melville, his house has forged a valuable link in the literary chain which binds the English-speaking peoples together. He also presented for some years the English prize in the literary entente with France, inaugurated by the two Parisian Journals, *Femina* and *Vie Heureuse*. The *Femina-Vie Heureuse*

Prize is awarded to the younger generation of English authors for the best piece of imaginative work published during a given period. The complimentary award to French authors was known as the Northcliffe Prize.

Herbert Jenkins was with John Lane for some years before starting the publishing business which bears his name. No publisher ever worked harder at his craft; yet he snatched time to write the *Bindle* tales, which laid the foundation of the firm's early reputation for humorous literature and were almost as successful as the books by P. G. Wodehouse which also bore his imprint. Unhappily he overtaxed his strength, and was still in his forties when seized with the illness which struck him down in 1923. His chief contribution to letters, written before he took to publishing under his own name, was his *Life of George Borrow*, issued by John Murray in 1911.

Martin Secker, who also came to the front before the first World War, gathered a distinguished group of writers round him in John Street, Adelphi: D. H. Lawrence, J. E. Flecker, Lascelles Abercrombie, Compton Mackenzie, Arthur Machen, and Norman Douglas, among the English authors; Lion Feuchtwanger, with his *Few Süß*, and Thomas Mann, with *Buddenbrooks*, among the Continental element. His business was absorbed in the new company of Martin Secker and Warburg, founded in 1936 by Frederic J. Warburg, who had shared in the revival of the house of Routledge, and Roger H. P. Senhouse. Besides continuing the literary traditions of the original firm the directors have widened its interests to include books on international affairs and politics generally, particularly the problems of democracy in a post-war world.

Eveleigh Nash, another familiar name in the annals of early twentieth-century publishing, built up his business largely on fiction, modern autobiographies, and historical memoirs by Martin Hume, Francis Gribble, and others. He subsequently sold his financial interest in the company to Sir Henry Grayson, who joined the board of directors with his son in 1921. Eveleigh Nash took to authorship in his retirement with his *I Liked the Life I Lived*. *Nash's Magazine*, which he founded, he sold to William Randolph Hearst, who made it into a valuable property.

Sir Stanley Unwin, LL.D., who revealed the anatomy of publishing in his book on the subject, served for some years with his uncle, Fisher Unwin, as well as in Leipzig, where he obtained a grasp of the

most thoroughly organised book trade in the world. The house of George Allen and Unwin, of which he is the head, now includes the publications of Swan Sonnenschein and Company, George Allen and Sons, and the Swarthmore Press. In proportion to its size it probably makes a bigger contribution to the common stock of knowledge than any other publishing house in the Kingdom.¹ Like Jonathan Cape, G. Wren Howard, Harold Raymond, W. G. Harrap, and others, he has always been an ardent advocate of closer co-operation between all the scattered but component parts of the literary market.

A good deal had already been done in that connexion after the first World War. By means of the Society of Bookmen, inspired by Sir Hugh Walpole at a meeting at the Whitefriars' Club in 1920, a group of authors, publishers, booksellers, librarians, printers and binders pooled their ideas for initiating schemes for the benefit of every one concerned. One of the results of their labours was the birth in 1924 of the National Book Council, which had for its avowed object 'the promotion of book reading and the wider distribution of books.' Not too many books were published, it was argued; but not enough books were bought. Though all branches were represented on it the Council claimed that it was not a trade organisation. Its affairs were entrusted to an executive committee of representatives of the Society of Authors, the Publishers' Association, the Publishers' Circle—an offshoot of the Association, which meets periodically for the discussion of trade affairs—the Associated Booksellers, and the Society of Bookmen. The organising secretary was Maurice Marston, with offices in Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, where he formed the nucleus of a reference library of books about books by his gift to the Council of his collection of some three hundred volumes.

In its own words the Book Council existed 'to help would-be readers with information, to stimulate by lectures the public interest in books, to impress on the consciousness of the nation the fact that books are not a mere luxury nor a mere diversion, but an inspiration, an essential education, and an equipment for life that admits of no substitute.' Promising work was soon done through the formation of reading circles, the presentation of book prizes at schools, the support of local book centres, and classified lists issued by the

¹ Allen and Unwin have also acquired Thomas Murby & Co., known the world over for their geological books, and Elkin Mathews and Marrot, educational publishers. Both imprints are still used.

hundred thousand. The seed thus widely sown bore abundant fruit in the years to come, when the N.B.C. (as recorded in a later page) became the National Book League.

This closer co-operation between authors and the various branches of the trade was a welcome sign of the age. It was by no means the first time, however, that the lion and the lamb had ventured to lie down together. E. V. Lucas, most discerning of critics and readers of manuscripts, as well as one of the publishers' distinguished authors, became a director of Methuen's on the conversion of that firm into a limited liability company in 1910.¹ How John Buchan afterwards Lord Tweedsmuir, with the accomplished ease of a master who had nothing else to do, succeeded in writing a whole library of books of romance, history and biography in the midst of his activities as a director of Nelson's—to say nothing of his increasing political and other interests—remained a mystery to all his admirers.

An earlier instance could be cited in the case of Arthur Waugh, who won the 'Newdigate' at Oxford and contributed to the *Yellow Book*, besides writing or editing half a dozen volumes, before becoming managing director of Chapman and Hall. Arthur Waugh held that post for twenty-eight years, discovering meanwhile many new and popular novelists, among them his own two sons, Evelyn and Alec. He resigned in 1930, Chapman and Hall's centenary year, in order to concentrate on the literary side of the business, and incidentally to write the centenary history of his firm.

While some writers continue to join the publishers others abandon the trade for the profession of letters. Frank Swinnerton, for example, spent many years with Chatto and Windus and other firms before his growing reputation as a novelist enabled him to abandon office life. At one early stage in his career G. K. Chesterton also worked in a publishing office: as a junior clerk on Fisher Unwin's staff. Miss Storm Jameson was at one time manager for Knopf's office in London, in association with Guy Chapman, another author-publisher, whom she married.

Thus the old saw about authors and publishers has lost much of its point. Otherwise it might be said that Leonard Woolf, after-

¹ When Sir Algernon Methuen died in 1924, E. V. Lucas became Chairman of the Board, with C. W. Chamberlain as Managing Director, and F. Muller as Assistant Managing Director. Muller subsequently retired to found the publishing house bearing his name. Chamberlain, after some years of retirement from Methuen's, returned to steer it through the difficult years of the Second World War. (See pp. 366-7.)

wards literary editor of the *Nation and Athenæum*, and his gifted wife Virginia Woolf carried the war successfully into the enemy's camp when they founded the Hogarth Press in 1917. They not only published their own works, but books by Miss V. Sackville-West, H. G. Wells and others gave added distinction to a list of which it was well said that it was always rich in ideas. Not many authors of to-day dare to become booksellers. Did not Felix Dahn declare that: 'To write a book is a task needing only pen, ink and paper; to print a book is rather more difficult, because genius often expresses itself illegibly; to read a book is more difficult still, for one has to struggle with sleep; but to sell a book is the most difficult task of all'? Nevertheless there have been a few notable exceptions, among them the late Roger Ingpen, the Shelley scholar, who having once been a publisher—he founded the firm of Selwyn and Blount after learning the business first with Smith, Elder, where he was on the editorial staff of the *Cornhill*, and afterwards with Hutchinson's, where he edited their series of standard biographies—finally set up as an antiquarian bookseller in Museum Street. David Garnett¹ tried bookselling with Francis Birrell before he wrote *Lady into Fox*, and later became a director of the Nonesuch Press, founded in 1923 by Mr. (now Sir) Francis Meynell. This group of literary directors of publishing houses also included Eric Partridge, who came over with the Australians as an infantryman—giving an account of his experiences in *Three Personal Records of the War*—and was a practised man of letters before he started the Scholartis Press, one of the semi-private ventures into publishing which, like the other newcomers just mentioned, helped to raise the standard of production, extending the modern refinements of book-building to the ordinary edition. There is little justification for the complaint still occasionally heard that English printing is decadent. Shoddy work, it is true, is plentiful enough, but there has unquestionably been a steady revival in the art of book production ever since the impulse given to it by William Morris. Before his advent and the efforts of Sir Emery Walker and others to extend the movement in all directions, fine workmanship and beauty of design were expected only in costly productions. Morris's inspiring example bore worthy fruit in the work of T. J. Cobden-Sanderson's Doves Press; St. John Hornby's Ashendene Press; Charles Rickett's Vale-Press; Robert Gibbings's

¹ Now a partner in the publishing house of Rupert Hart-Davis, who was a director of Jonathan Cape's until the Second World War.

Golden Cockerel Press—founded by Harold Taylor in 1920; R. A. Maynard's Gregynog Press, and other ventures, the founders of which, however, disclaimed any intention of following slavishly in Morris's footsteps.

After A. H. Bullen's death in 1920 the traditions of the Shakespeare Head Press were continued by Basil Blackwell, of Oxford, and the group of men associated with him in its subsequent purchase. North's *Plutarch*, which came from the Press in 1928 in eight beautifully printed volumes, under the typographical guidance of that scholar-printer, Bernard Newdigate, was a successful attempt to produce a great English classic at a modern price, in an edition worthy of any library. The Shakespeare Head editions of Smollett, Sterne, Fielding and other eighteenth century novelists, followed by Michael Sadleir's edition of Trollope, were all issued in similarly comely but inexpensive volumes. Bernard Newdigate crowned his own contributions to English literature with his editions of the poems of Ben Jonson (1936) and the Shakespeare Head edition of Drayton in six handsome volumes, completed in 1941, some three years before his death.

In 1930 the publishers had moved the Press from the banks of the Avon to those of the Isis, setting it up anew in the more convenient and equally congenial atmosphere of their own town of Oxford. Besides thus helping in the modern revival of fine printing and greatly developing the publishing side of his own business, Basil Blackwell, who was President of the Associated Booksellers of Great Britain and Ireland in 1934-35, has been in the forefront of the movement for closer co-operation and better organisation throughout the trade. Mention must also be made of another well-known Oxford firm, Mowbray and Company, the religious publishers, who have a house in London, and were established in 1858—an outcome of the Anglo-Catholic Revival. Like Blackwell's they are publishers, as well as booksellers, on the lines of other days. The same remark applies to the Cambridge firms of Heffer and Sons, distinguished for their educational and other publications; Deighton, Bell and Company, who date from about 1777; and Bowes and Bowes—sometime Macmillan and Bowes—whose bookshop at No. 1 Trinity Street boasts a history of nearly three hundred and fifty years. The story of 'Cambridge Bookselling and the Oldest Bookshop in the United Kingdom' was told by George J. Gray in a book which Bowes and Bowes published in 1925.

The death of Philip Lee Warner, in 1925, removed a publisher whose enthusiasm for fine printing has not perhaps received its due recognition. The son of Sir William Lee Warner, he developed his taste for publishing with Fisher Unwin, J. M. Dent, and Putnam's, before becoming a partner in Chatto and Windus's in 1905. His interest in art and study of Continental methods of reproduction led in 1908 to his incorporation of the Medici Society and the production of the now familiar Medici prints, followed by the typographical and publishing developments in co-operation with Herbert Horne, who designed first the 'Florence' and then the 'Riccardi' type. The example set by all these enthusiastic craftsmen could not fail to affect the trade. Scrupulous attention to every detail is not looked for to-day in vain, in some of the cheapest books.

Leanings in certain directions towards Big Business and 'rationalisation' were other marked tendencies in publishing between the two wars. In the amalgamation of the biggest group about a dozen houses came under the control of Hutchinson and Company, including Hurst and Blackett, the successors of Henry Colburn; and such firms as Jarrolds, Publishers (London), Skeffington and Son, Selwyn and Blount, Stanley Paul, John Long, and Andrew Melrose. The business which T. Fisher Unwin had maintained since 1883 became merged in Ernest Benn Limited, an offshoot of Benn Brothers, who celebrated their jubilee in 1930 as one of the leading publishers of trade journals in this country.

Sir Ernest Benn, announcing that the subsidiary firm was interested in good literature of every class 'from fiction to works on synthetic rubber or early Chinese pottery', established his new concern with the help of Victor Gollancz and Douglas Jerrold. In 1927 Victor Gollancz launched his own craft. Like William Heinemann, in the eighteen-nineties of the last century, he shot to the front with a series of popular successes—Cronin's *Hatter's Castle*, Golding's *Magnolia Street*, Lady Eleanor Smith's *Red Wagon*, F. Yeats Brown's *Bengal Lancer*, Edward Marjoribanks's *Life of Marshall Hall* and others—developing the cult of the best-seller with transatlantic astuteness. A born individualist, he soon made his influence felt in other literary and dramatic fields, with political education as his absorbing passion. Founding the Left Book Club he became a stormy petrel in politics as well as in publishing. His own writings, both during and after the Second World War, revealed him as a controversialist of no mean order.

In this tangled history it has unfortunately been impossible to incorporate the publishing records of such great institutions, for instance, as the S.P.C.K., the Religious Tract Society, and the British and Foreign Bible Society—all centenarians. To the same category belong such historic names as Eyre and Spottiswoode, the King's Printers, and publishers of numerous editions of the Bible and Book of Common Prayer, who, under Douglas Jerrold's guidance, have launched out in other special fields of literature in recent years; James Nisbet and Company, established in 1810, whose founder, like William Hone, came under the influence of Edward Irving, and not only sat under him—as may be gathered from the *Lessons from the Life of James Nisbet the Publisher*—but contributed £21,000 to the Regent's Square Church; and Seeley, Service and Company, founded in Buckingham by Bentley Seeley and transferred to London in 1795—now a limited company, whose chairman is F. Stanley Service. Before joining Seeley's, Mr. Service had some sixteen years' experience of publishing both in this country and on the Continent. Another well-known director at Nisbet's is Bertram Christian, who went into publishing by way of the Bar and literary journalism. He is also proprietor of *Christophers* and was President of the Publishers' Association in 1931-2.

Some reference must also be made to the house of Batsford, founded in 1843 and long famous for its books about architecture and other arts and crafts; and, in recent years, for its illustrated tributes to the beauty of rural England: all commemorated in *A Batsford Century: The Record of a Hundred Years of Publishing and Bookselling*, edited by Hector Bolitho. Other centenarian firms whose names at least must be included, are the Scottish publishing houses of T. and T. Clark and Oliver and Boyd—firms who, with printers like T. and A. Constable, J. and J. Gray, the printers of this book, and Morrison and Gibb, have helped to keep Edinburgh, in proportion to its size, the busiest printing centre in the Kingdom. J. W. Arrowsmith, of Bristol, whose publishing activities are now represented by J. W. Arrowsmith (London) Limited, is best remembered for a number of notable successes in the eighteen-eighties, when the Bristol Library of Fiction was started. The first volume was Hugh Conway's *Called Back*, some 350,000 copies of which were sold within the first five years. Arrowsmith's later triumphs included Jerome K. Jerome's *Three Men in a Boat*, and Anthony Hope's *Prisoner of Zenda*.

One of the most notable revivals in modern publishing is that of the house of Routledge, which had fallen on evil days after its removal to Broadway, off Ludgate Hill, and the founder's death in 1888. When the business was taken over in 1902 by the new company formed by W. Swan Sonnenschein—who later adopted his mother's name of Stallybrass—with Arthur E. Franklin, partner in the banking house of A. Keyser and Company as chairman, it rapidly renewed its youth and enterprise. It bought up the copyrights of J. C. Nimmo in the following year, and in 1911 absorbed the business of Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Company, maintaining this as a separate company. The late Laurie Magnus, who had previously acted as editor of Mr. Murray's educational department, was for some years associated with the new regime. The guiding spirit, however, and the senior managing director, was W. Swan Stallybrass. Under this leadership the combined forces of Routledge and Kegan Paul, apart from producing standard works in various fields, made many contributions to modern knowledge with such series as the International Library of Psychology, Philosophy, and Scientific Method; and the *History of Civilization*.

When Arthur Franklin resigned the chairmanship in 1933 he was succeeded by Major-General Sir Frederick Maurice. His son, Cecil A. Franklin, who entered the business in 1906, is now joint managing director with T. Murray Ragg. Herbert Read joined the board in 1939 to take an active part in the shaping of their policy.

W. Swan Stallybrass, who died in 1931, crystallised his knowledge of literature in the classified dictionary of *The Best Books*, issued under his former name in 1887, and its supplementary *Reader's Guide*. After going through several editions these were united in one work and brought up to date (1910-1931). Swan Sonnenschein and Company, now incorporated with Allen and Unwin, specialised for the most part in history, psychology, philosophy and other branches of learning, but also enjoyed the distinction of publishing J. M. Barrie's first book, *Better Dead*, in 1887—an experimental piece of fooling which he wrote, as he afterwards explained, when he had 'small hope of getting anyone to accept the Scotch'; and George Moore's *Confessions of a Young Man* in the following year. *Better Dead* was originally published at a shilling. In the summer of 1930, when a single copy of that edition was worth anything up to £20, the manuscript was sold in a London sale room for £2,400.

The story of one firm thus leads to another in all bookselling and

publishing annals. Some of their histories are like the palimpsests of ancient scribes or superimposed paintings of old masters. Their records are often erased altogether, or they lose their identity in that of their successors. Wells Gardner, Darton and Company, for instance, though founded in 1859, had their origins in several older houses. Joseph W. Darton, one of the founders, was in the direct line of succession from the Quaker firms of Harvey and Darton, who published books for generations of children after the deaths of 'Honest John Newbery' and his successors. The theological side came from Wells Gardner, who bought the publishing business of John Morgan, and, with his brother, had been a partner in the Oxford Bible Warehouse before this was taken over by Henry Frowde.

Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons launched out in general literature when they absorbed the business of Isbister and Company, into which the older concern of Strahan and Company had been incorporated in the early 'seventies. Another side was added when they took over the technical publishing firm of Whittaker and Company in 1918.

The great distributing house of Simpkin, Marshall, which was to suffer so grievously in the Second World War, was an amalgamation of three firms: Simpkin, Marshall; Hamilton, Adams; and William Kent and Company. Joseph Shaylor, who became managing director of the combined house in 1894, and one of the most industrious chroniclers of the trade, as well as a familiar figure in London literary circles, linked up some of his partners with Cowper's publishers, Joseph Johnson, of St. Paul's Churchyard, and other old firms. The founder of Simpkin, Marshall's was Benjamin Crosby, whose descendants carried on the technical publishing business of Crosby, Lockwood and Company. Crosby, who had worked for George Robinson, the self-styled 'King of the Booksellers', was the first to organise the wholesale trade on modern lines. Travelling regularly and systematically through the country, and investing with the greatest enterprise in publishers' stock, he laid the foundations of a firm which became known throughout the trade. Owing to illness he parted with his business in 1814 to W. Simpkin, a local tradesman with capital, and R. Marshall, one of Crosby's assistants. To-day the London publishers employ their own travellers to 'subscribe' their works among booksellers in town and country, but 'Simpkin's' remained the main source of supply

for the retail trade both at home and overseas. Besides being the largest distributing house in the kingdom, if not in the world, it published for many authors—Miss Braddon and Helen Mathers among the novelists, and Tennyson among the poets. Some of the leading provincial wholesalers are also publishers: Oliver and Boyd, for example, of Edinburgh, where, too, Menzies and Company are to be found, as well as at Glasgow; and John Heywood Limited, of Manchester, where another great wholesale house, Abel Heywood and Sons, has also been long established.

Pressure of space prevents more than passing references not only to such modern developments as the growth of Boots' Library—that vast efficient organisation which has played no small part in the growth of the book-reading habit in this country in 1900—and to the rise and manifold activities of what is claimed to be 'the world's greatest bookshop' established by the brothers William and Gilbert Foyle in Charing Cross Road in 1904, but also to the achievements of some of the publishing houses founded in London in the early twentieth century. These include such firms as George G. Harrap and Company, who have forged steadily ahead in educational and general literature and *belles lettres*, since they were founded in 1901; Geoffrey Bles, whose first publishing experiences were gained with Herbert Jenkins; Peter Davies—immortalised in *Peter Pan*,¹ whose firm, though maintaining its independent policy, has been linked up with Heinemann's since 1937; and Faber and Faber, who are issuing some of the most distinctive work in present-day literature from Russell Square.

Faber and Faber had their roots in the Scientific Press, which published the *Hospital Newspaper* and the *Nursing Mirror*, founded and edited for many years by Sir Henry Burdett. On the death of Sir Henry Burdett the Scientific Press passed to his elder daughter, Lady Gwyer, whose husband, Sir Maurice Linford Gwyer, Procurator-General and Solicitor to the Treasury, became Vice-Chancellor of Delhi University. With the arrival of Geoffrey Cust Faber in 1924 the business became known as Faber and Gwyer, and branched out boldly into general literature.

¹ Peter Davies is the third among 'The Five' to whom J. M. Barrie dedicated the text of *Peter Pan* when it was first published in 1928 by Hodder and Stoughton. 'As for myself', wrote the author, 'I suppose I always knew that I made Peter by rubbing the five of you violently together, as savages with two sticks produce a flame.' 'The Five' were the sons of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Llewellyn Davies, son-in-law and daughter of George Du Maurier. The eldest was killed in the first World War.

Mr. Faber, who has been Estates Bursar of All Souls College, Oxford, since 1923, served for a time on the editorial side of the Oxford University Press, under Humphrey Milford, after coming down from Oxford shortly before the War of 1914-18. The War years found him with the London Regiment in France and Flanders. Afterwards, before returning to publishing, he became a Fellow of All Souls, was called to the Bar, and wrote several books. Having acquired his old partners' share in the business he became chairman of the company, now renamed 'Faber and Faber'.

The first volume of poetry issued by the firm (in 1925) was by T. S. Eliot, one of its directors from its earliest days, and a tower of strength on its literary side. Geoffrey Faber, himself no mean poet—as was revealed in the collected edition of his verse published in 1941 under the title *The Buried Stream*—played, like Frank Sidgwick, a leading part in helping to discover and foster the poetry of his time. A London University Students' Society once described him as the godfather of modern English poetry. Another director, responsible for the high standard of production of Faber books, is Richard de la Mare, son of the poet, Walter de la Mare, who, with Auden, Spender, MacNeice and Herbert Read, is represented in the same list. Most departments of art and letters are also included, with works by such authors as Siegfried Sassoon, A. G. Street, Phyllis Bottome, Henry Williamson, J. W. Dunne, Liddell Hart and C. E. M. Joad, besides T. S. Eliot's own poetry and criticism.

New threads are always being woven into the fabric of the book trade. While young firms forge to the front others remind us of the British Constitution in their everlasting strength. The House of Longman, for instance, has endured for more than two centuries. Its bicentenary was celebrated at Stationers' Hall in 1924, when leading men of letters and science paid tribute to a firm which, as Sir Rider Haggard bore witness, had 'flourished for two hundred years without a single blot upon its name.' That great historic publishing house, in the words of George Macaulay Trevelyan, 'was not a creation of the State, nor of the Church, nor of the Universities, nor of any corporate body. Nor was it the creation of the money-getting impulse. It stood indeed for self-help and the effort of the individual, but it stood also for family tradition, for ideals of public usefulness and assistance to the cause of literature and science, handed on from generation to generation.' The hereditary char-

acter of the house had been maintained unbroken throughout its long history. Long before its bicentenary was commemorated a sixth generation was already playing a prominent part in its management. There is something of the same continuity in the Macaulay-Trevelyan alliance with the firm, Longmans acting to-day as publishers for Dr. G. M. Trevelyan, whose father, Sir George Otto Trevelyan, and whose great-uncle, Lord Macaulay, were both closely associated with them for so many years. With their publication in 1930 of *William III and the Defence of Holland*, by Dr. Trevelyan's daughter, Miss Mary C. Trevelyan, and of the two volumes of the collected poems and plays by his brother, R. C. Trevelyan, in 1942, four generations of the same distinguished family are now represented in Longmans' list.

Since we last had occasion to speak of their activities many scholarly volumes, and great undertakings like the *Political History of England*, had been added to their catalogue before Thomas Norton Longman's retirement in 1919.¹ Associated with him in all these developments were his two cousins, Charles J. Longman, who entered the firm in 1874 and succeeded him as head of the business; and Sir Hubert H. Longman, who received his Baronetcy for public and political services in Edward VII's last Birthday Honours List; and his younger brother, George H. Longman, sometime captain of Eton cricket and captain of the Cambridge eleven, who subsequently became managing director when the business was made a limited company. He died on 19th August 1938. Charles J. Longman celebrated the jubilee of his entrance into the firm while the bicentenary commemoration was taking place in 1924, and retired four years later. He was archery champion of England in 1883 and joint author of the *Archery* volume in the Badminton Library, as well as editor of *Longman's Magazine* from 1882 to 1905. He died in 1934.

At the present day the sixth generation is represented by William Longman, son of Charles J. Longman, and Robert G. Longman, son of George H. Longman; both of whom joined the firm in 1905. William Longman, like his father, the first president of the Publishers' Association of Great Britain and Ireland, plays a leading part in the inner councils of his craft. The years 1930-1, by a happy chance, found the names of Longman and Rivington again linked together at the head of the Association, William Longman having

¹ Thomas Norton Longman died, at the age of 81, on 1st November 1930.

been elected president and G. C. Rivington, vice-president. Mr. Rivington, head of the publishing firm, founded by his cousin, Septimus Rivington, in 1889, belongs to a branch of the family which has held the clerkship of the Stationers' Company from 1800 to the present day, so closely does tradition cling to the trade in all its branches.¹

Longman's—to anticipate a later chapter in our history—remained in Paternoster Row until their historic home was destroyed by enemy action at the close of 1940. For a time the business was carried on from a temporary address at Southfields, Wimbledon, but is now re-established in Clifford Street where three younger members of the Longman family have joined the board. It may be worth adding that the firm is now one of the few publishing concerns to become public limited liability companies with share quotations from time to time on the Stock Exchange.

¹ G. C. Rivington's father was clerk of the Stationers' Company from 1869 to 1916, when he resigned—to be succeeded by his nephew, Reginald T. Rivington, son of Canon Thurston Rivington.

THE UNEASY PEACE

FRESH chapters are needed to carry this crowded record through the interlude between the two World Wars and the devastating years that followed. It was an interval full of social and political anxieties at home and abroad, sorely affecting the well-being of a craft as susceptible as the book trade is to any crisis in public affairs. Though buttressed by the Net Agreement the trade still lacked at the end of the First World War the united strength necessary to shoulder all its burdens. In the early 1920's, as Harold Raymond, senior partner of Chatto and Windus—one whose work on behalf of books in general and the National Book Council, afterwards the National Book League, will long be remembered—recalled in his J. M. Dent Memorial Lecture at Stationers' Hall, almost the only contact between the Publishers' and the Booksellers' Associations appeared to be the Net Book Agreement. 'It seemed almost as if the efforts involved in achieving that life-saving expedient had sapped the vitality of the trade, and that the two Associations had come to regard that agreement as the be-all and end-all of co-operation.'

A move in the right direction was made, as recorded on p. 327, on the initiative of Sir Hugh Walpole, who appealed to every one concerned—authors, publishers, booksellers, binders and so on—to get together in their common interests. The immediate outcome of this appeal was a series of meetings at Sir Hugh Walpole's house in 1921 by a group known as the 'Last Tuesdays'. Later in the same year the 'Last Tuesdays'—twenty-six leading representatives of most branches of the industry—formed themselves into the Society of Bookmen, aiming, under Hugh Walpole's presidency, at 'the advancement of literature by the co-operation of the various branches of the book trade'. Out of the informal discussions of this friendly dining club arose not only the National Book Council, whose early activities are described in the preceding chapter, but, incidentally, the creation of the Book Trade's Joint Committee, destined to place the old contentious relationship between the Publishers' Association and the Associated Booksellers upon a happier footing.

This was not accomplished without years of arduous work, resulting in reports and recommendations representing a real effort on the part of the trade to put its house in order. The seeds had been sown in the earlier report of the delegation sent to Leipzig and Amsterdam in the spring of 1926, under the auspices of the Society of Bookmen, to study the highly organised system at work in the German and Dutch book trades. The delegation included C. S. Evans, head of Heinemann's, who represented the Publishers' Association; Jonathan Cape; H. E. Alden, for many years head of 'Simpkin's', President of the Associated Booksellers in 1929-31, and one of the great personalities of the trade; David Roy, who, with J. Ainslie Thin, represented the Associated Booksellers; and F. J. Hanks, of B. H. Blackwell, Limited, representing the Society of Bookmen together with Stanley Unwin, Chairman of the delegation, who knew the German book trade from close personal experience in his younger days in a retail bookshop in Leipzig. The result of their strenuous tour was a report which led for the moment to little but acrimonious discussion, and the pronouncement on the part of the Publishers' Association that the matter was no question at all for the Society of Bookmen. Nothing loth, the Society raised no objection to the matter being taken out of its hands, to be dealt with officially by a newly-created Joint Committee representing the Publishers' Association and Associated Booksellers alone, with the members of the delegation among its number.

Thus the two governing bodies joined together at last seriously to explore the possibilities of closer collaboration and review existing practice in all its growing complexities. This committee sat for two laborious years, issuing reports in 1928 and 1929, subsequently printed with much other relevant matter,¹ and creating a Joint Advisory Committee—the J.A.C. as it came to be known—as a permanent council representative of the trade as a whole. The members of the Committee whose labours at length resulted in something like a new Constitution for the trade, governing nearly all matters affecting the interests of booksellers and publishers alike, were, it should be recorded:

The Publishers' Association: G. H. Bickers (G. Bell & Sons); Jonathan Cape; C. W. Chamberlain (Methuen & Co.); C. S. Evans

¹ *British Book Trade Organisation: A Report of the Work of the Joint Committee*, edited by F. D. Sanders, Secretary of the Publishers' Association, with an introduction by Stanley Unwin, 1939.

(Heinemann); William Longman; Harold Raymond (Chatto and Windus); G. C. Rivington, Hon. Treasurer; W. Symons (Blackie & Son); Stanley Unwin; Geoffrey S. Williams, Vice-Chairman; George Wilson (A. & C. Black).

The Associated Booksellers: H. E. Alden (Simpkin, Marshall); G. B. Bowes (Bowes and Bowes, Cambridge); F. Brown (Educational Supply Association); Frank A. Denny (A. & F. Denny); Gilbert Foyle (W. & G. Foyle); F. J. Hanks (B. H. Blackwell, Oxford); J. Norman Read (John Read, Bolton); David Roy (W. H. Smith & Son); W. S. Sisson (Sisson & Parker, Nottingham); A. Stevens (The Times' Book Club); J. Ainslie Thin (James Thin, Edinburgh); Charles Young (Lamley & Co., London). Maurice Marston acted as Secretary to the Committee.

No one who did not serve both on the committee itself and some of its sub-committees, wrote Stanley Unwin in his introduction to the published Report, 'has any conception what a time-absorbing occupation it was.' Special reference was made by the same writer to 'the indefatigable work and self-sacrifice of the chairman, Mr. G. Brimley Bowes'. Not all the recommendations were universally approved but they were accepted as a new charter in the history of the British book trade.

There was urgent need for closer co-operation with so many fresh problems to face. New methods of mechanical production had made it possible to print books as easily as newspapers. Enterprising newcomers had introduced disturbing elements of Big Business. Publishing had become a scramble for the best-seller, with glaring advertisements heralding new masterpieces every week: 'Vanity Advertisements', often designed not only to sell the book of the week or the book of the month as the case might be, but also to lure into the advertiser's net other authors unaccustomed to the flattery of finding their names emblazoned in print like those of Hollywood film stars.

Authors, as Frank Swinnerton, with personal knowledge of both camps, pointed out at the time in *Authors and the Book Trade*, had not grasped the fact that the established publisher lived by his list, and not by individual books in it. 'He has to do his best for all the books in it.' Steps were taken during the nineteen-thirties to counter the mounting costs of this publicity, but, for the most part, until the Six Years War introduced the rationing of advertisement space in the press, dignity and tradition

continued to be thrust aside by a riot of display and expenditure which could only benefit the best-seller at the expense of literature as a whole.

The same argument may be, and has been, applied to the Book Club movement—another factor which added to the modern complexities of the craft. Imported from America by the Book Society, with a committee of eminent authors appointed to make its monthly selection, it is, nevertheless, an organisation trading for profit; and, it is argued, cannot be expected, however disinterested its committee's love of letters may be, always to render its decision on absolute quality alone. It is true that many deserving authors who had never had a fair crack of the whip in the regular market-place suddenly found themselves among the elect; but authors on the whole were not enamoured of a system which tended, like 'Vanity Advertising', to rob Peter to pay Paul. Booksellers resented its activities because, by the very large size of its orders to the publishers, the Book Society could buy at a lower rate than the regular retailer; and were not greatly impressed by the society's argument that its choice benefited the retailer because the free advertisement thus given to the chosen book created a demand outside the society's own circle.

Be that as it may, the movement established itself and led to similar organisations within the publishing trade itself, political, religious and what not, running to memberships not of tens but of hundreds of thousands. Outstanding among these was the Reprint Society's series of 'World Books', initiated on the eve of the Six Years War with an editorial board consisting of several leading publishers and the Chairman and Secretary of the Book Society. Beginning with a selection of half-crown editions which included Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, and books by Kipling, Hugh Walpole and Peter Fleming, the Reprint Society's venture became a phenomenal success, in spite of the war, during which its membership rose to something like 96,000.

Another arresting development in the nineteen-thirties was the growth of the Twopenny Libraries. With branches everywhere these provided an outlet in all directions for the overflow of books, good, bad and indifferent. Their promoters claimed that by attracting a public little inclined to enter a bookshop or big circulating library they were kindling a love of books which in the long run would be good for every one concerned. For the time

being, however, compelled to adapt their policy to the demands of readers who, for the most part, were more familiar with cheap periodicals and novelettes, they could do little to raise the standard of literary taste.

More enduring in their literary influence were the 'Penguins', that remarkable series which revolutionised the cheap reprint market. Started in 1935 by Allen Lane, then managing director of the business over which John Lane had so long presided at the Bodley Head,¹ the Penguins were inspired by a belief that the standard of reading was on the up-grade, and a personal interest on the founder's past in popular education. They were never a Bodley Head undertaking. After the first twenty titles had appeared a new company was formed, 'Penguin Books Limited', on 1st January 1936, by Allen Lane and his two brothers, Richard and John (John was killed in action in 1942), and the venture, growing from strength to strength, became a phenomenal success. 'Pelican' Books emerged from the same source in 1937, followed by other sister-series, including the Penguin Classics—new translations of the masterpieces of Greek and Latin literature, as well as of famous modern books in other languages, under the editorship of E. V. Rieu—which have been among the outstanding achievements of twentieth-century publishing. The sale of a million 'Penguins', made up of ten volumes of Bernard Shaw's works, issued on the occasion of Shaw's ninetieth birthday, established a record.

Meanwhile the spate of books in the nineteen-thirties continued unchecked, save for some nervous hesitation during the international crises of 1938. For the harassed bookseller it had become an insoluble problem to pick and choose the worth-while books among the unending stream. J. G. Wilson expressed it neatly in his 'observations' at one of the *Sunday Times* Exhibitions, which had then become a feature of the autumn season in London, when he said: 'Choosing his stocks has been for the bookseller rather like the Hallowe'en game of dipping for apples. They come flying past

¹ John Lane's business continued its separate identity when it was taken over in 1937 as a co-operative venture by three publishing firms—George Allen & Unwin, Jonathan Cape, and J. M. Dent—with Stanley Unwin, G. Wren Howard (joint managing director of Cape's) and W. G. Taylor (Chairman of J. M. Dent's) on the board. The new Bodley Head, now exhibiting its sign in Bloomsbury, and making vigorous strides under another director, C. J. Greenwood, absorbed a number of smaller firms. Among these were Boriswood's, and the businesses founded by R. Cobden-Sanderson, Martin Hopkinson, and Gerald Howe. All had aimed at high literary standards and together added a distinguished group of established authors to the Bodley Head list.

in a swirling stream, and he has just to make a dive at what he can catch. Only a book exhibition can give the public any idea of what the bookseller saves them from.'

This was obvious from the increase in the total number of new books published each year, rising from about 7,000 in 1918 to some 14,600 in 1933, and upwards of 17,000 in the peak year of 1937. There was a drop in 1938, the year of the Austrian Anschluss and the Munich crisis, but the totals still included upwards of 16,000 new titles. The market was glutted. Publishers themselves, as well as the booksellers, deplored the excessive flood. Geoffrey Faber in particular condemned the tendency to 'feed the people with mush'. It was not without reason that impartial critics afterwards complained that too many books between the wars were published with little of that sense of responsibility which had influenced public opinion in the past.

Archibald MacLeish, American poet and Librarian of Congress, addressing American booksellers in terms which had an equal relevance on both sides of the Atlantic, declared in 1942 that the book trade had its share of responsibility which all classes had to shoulder for the evil which had fallen on the world. Although more books than ever had been issued, and many publishers had devoted more money than they had to spare on courageous ventures in art and letters, the vast bulk of the literature produced gave inadequate warning of the grave actualities of the time. Despite their fanaticism and racial hatred the young Nazis who made their bonfire of 25,000 books outside the University of Berlin on 13th May 1933 were right to be afraid of books. They knew only too well, as MacLeish put it, that 'a free man's books—such books as free men with a free man's pride can write—are weapons of such edge and weight and power that those who would destroy the world of freedom must first destroy the books that freedom fights with.'

But for Germany more might have been achieved in the way of international good-will through the International Publishers' Congresses inaugurated in Paris in 1896. The Paris conference had been followed by similar meetings in Brussels (1897), London (1899), Leipzig (1901), Milan (1906), Madrid (1908), Amsterdam (1910) and Budapest (1913). The Four Years War brought the first series to an untimely end, but a fresh start was made in Paris in 1931, when the President of the French Republic entertained representatives of all the nations taking part in it. In 1936 the Congress met

in London under the presidency of Stanley Unwin, President of the Publishers' Association of Great Britain and Ireland in 1933-5, whose exceptional knowledge of the book trade both at home and abroad fitted him admirably for the post. It was on this occasion that the Congress was marked by a reception of its members by the King and His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Two years later, when the German book trade was already being harnessed to the Nazi war machine, the last International Congress before the Six Years War was held at Leipzig under the sinister patronage of Dr. Goebbels.

THE SIX YEARS WAR

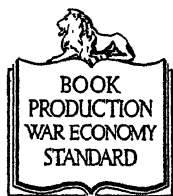
WHEN at length, in September 1939, the die was cast by Hitler, the British book trade, less bewildered than in the unexpected onrush of war a quarter of a century before, and better organised to meet the emergency, faced the crisis. Internal troubles vanished in the face of the national crisis and the stringency of State control. Paper was severely rationed. It was only after a long struggle that the Publishers' Association secured an allocation of sixty per cent on the book trade's pre-war consumption and the exemption from military service of irreplaceable key men at the age of thirty-five. The market, so recently glutted, gradually found itself unable to meet an insatiable demand for books of every description. With the black-out, the complete upheaval of all social life and activities, and a belated desire to learn as much as possible of a world which had made such a catastrophe possible, the public turned to books for 'escape' and illumination as never before.

Books on every aspect of the crisis now came pouring from the press. As in the earlier World War, Oxford provided another 'armoury of apologetics' and mine of information with the 'Oxford Pamphlets on World Affairs', the sales of which, in all parts of the globe, exceeded more than five million copies during the first five years after the appearance of the initial group in the summer of 1939. Other contributions from the Oxford University Press included the sister series on 'The World To-day', in handy illustrated volumes; the Cambridge University Press at the same time throwing light on the urgent political and international questions of the time in its authoritative 'Current Problems' series edited by Sir Ernest Barker.

Books became dearer as production costs mounted, but this was accepted by the public as one of war's necessities. So, too, were the slim volumes and other changes in format introduced under the voluntary trade agreement regarding methods of production embodied in the standardised design on the opposite page.

This agreement, limiting bulk and excluding all unessential

elegance, was a welcome sign of closer co-operation, and without parallel in the history of publishing. Its success was due to the admirable work done by the Technical Advisory Committee set up for the purpose by the Publishers' Association, the Council of which afterwards expressed the indebtedness of the whole trade to W. G. Taylor (Chairman), W. A. R. Collins, G. F. J. Cumberlege, G. Wren Howard, Richard de la Mare, R. A. Maynard, Stanley Morison, and the late G. H. Bickers, who, as members of the Committee, had devoted many hours to the problem, both in the committee room and elsewhere. Without their technical knowledge, leading to fruitful experiments in typography and lay-out, such an agreement would have been impossible.



THIS BOOK IS PRODUCED IN
COMPLETE CONFORMITY WITH THE
AUTHORIZED ECONOMY STANDARDS

Book-lovers were not enthusiastic about the new printed page, but it saved the situation. Publishing, remarked the Poet Laureate, John Masefield, 'had now become very much like a public funeral, with the printed note, "No flowers, by order". Gone were the hand-made paper, beautiful founts of type, spacious margins, bindings, gold lettering, and capitals in red, blue and green.' Yet the annual exhibitions of 'The Fifty Books of the Year', organised by the National Book League and chosen by a distinguished committee of book-lovers, showed that England's love of craftsmanship could survive even the horrors of war. A welcome tribute to this effort came from America when another of the National Book League's annual selection of the 'Fifty Books', after being exhibited in this country, was shown in New York. In opening that exhibition T. M. Cleland described it as representing a double miracle: 'the miracle that the books are here at all, and the miracle that they are as fine books as they are.'

Austerity production certainly led to no slackening in the public

demand. This outstripped the supply in every field. Meantime Government departments increased their control over all the printing and allied industries until book publishers were at their wit's end.

In the spring of 1940 the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Kingsley Wood, declaring his inability to differentiate between books and boots, brought matters to a head by threatening to include books in his Purchase Tax. Sir Stanley Unwin,¹ in his capacity of President of the International Publishers' Congress, heralded the immediate campaign of protest with the following letter, printed in *The Times* on May 3, 1940:

'Emphasis has properly been placed on the fact that the tax on purchases will not be levied on food for the body, but in characteristically English fashion there has been no reference to food for the mind. I hope no one will have the temerity to suggest that it is not needed or that it is merely a luxury. The book trade is staggering under a series of blows, of which war risks insurance and acute paper shortage are but two. It would indeed be ironical if it were completely knocked out by a levy on the purchase of books—in effect by a tax on knowledge.

'The International Publishers' Congress has consistently stood for the free exchange of books everywhere, and its efforts have met with almost uniform success. It would be humiliating if in a war for freedom of thought the sale of books in which man's highest thoughts are enshrined should be hampered by taxation.'

Taking up the challenge the Publishers' Association, led by Geoffrey Faber, its President at the time, with his predecessors in that office, G. Wren Howard, as Vice-President, and supported among others by Harold Macmillan, M.P., and David Roy, representing the Associated Booksellers, made urgent representations to the Government departments concerned. They pointed out that such a tax would fall with deadly effect not only on the whole educational and intellectual life of the nation, as well as the book trade at home, but also on the export trade in books, which made a large contribution towards the much-needed creation of foreign balances and depended on the survival of the

¹ Sir Stanley Unwin, who had previously received the honorary degree of LL.D. of Aberdeen University, was knighted in 1946.

home market. Unmoved by these representations the Chancellor of the Exchequer argued that he must have the money; that he could not make exceptions; and that after all there were enough books in the country to go on with.

Thus it came about that the publishers, as Geoffrey Faber put it, 'having banded themselves together to protect their own selfish interests, found themselves, almost to their own surprise, standing on guard before the portals of civilisation.' An independent deputation, headed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and representing religion, science, education, scholarship and pure literature, was organised to appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in person, but Sir Kingsley Wood remained adamant. Determined not to let the matter rest, the Publishers' Association promoted a public meeting of protest, while the members of the deputation sent a letter to *The Times* which, in its issue of June 22, had published a leading article emphasizing the chief reasons against taxing books, even in war-time. Confirming this the signatories of the letter urged that the nation could not afford, in such a time of crisis, to weaken 'the one means of mental and spiritual recreation which remains open to all', or to endanger the export of British books, depending as they did upon their production and circulation at home. The signatures to this joint letter included the names of the Archbishop of Canterbury; Dr. Robert Bond, Moderator of the Federal Council of the Free Churches; Sir Arthur Eddington; Lord Hambleden; Sir A. P. Herbert, as Senior Burgess for the University of Oxford; Professor A. V. Hill, M.P. for the University of Cambridge and Secretary of the Royal Society; Sir Charles Grant Robertson, President of the Historical Association; John Masefield and J. B. Priestley, as well as Geoffrey Faber, as President of the Publishers' Association, and Stanley Unwin, as Chairman of the Books and Periodicals Committee of the British Council.

The public meeting which followed was held at Stationers' Hall. It was presided over by Sir Hugh Walpole, who stoutly maintained that the enforcement of the Purchase Tax might make the whole of English contemporary literature silent and invisible; and was also addressed by J. B. Priestley, Geoffrey Faber, Dr. J. J. Mallon, and two of the M.P.'s who led the opposition to the tax in the House—Kenneth Lindsay and Henry Strauss.

Having thus brought all their guns to bear against the Government in the decisive debate in August, the opponents of the tax

were prepared for a stern struggle, but beyond some preliminary skirmishing, in which Sir A. P. Herbert played a major part, the fight collapsed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer's unexpected announcement that books, after all, would be exempted. 'It was really a most extraordinary thing', said Kenneth Lindsay afterwards, at the luncheon given in honour of himself and others chiefly responsible for securing this concession, 'a wordless victory, quite without parallel in my parliamentary experience.'

Geoffrey Faber, to whom Kenneth Lindsay paid tribute for his unremitting energy and skill in putting out his unanswerable case for exemption from the purely economic point of view, had reason for claiming for the Publishers' Association that year its share in what he described as a three-fold victory: the victory of the three P's—Paper, Purchase Tax and Personnel. Sterner trials lay ahead, but for the moment the trade rejoiced not only over its immediate gains, but also over the spirit of collaboration which had thus demonstrated its new-found strength.

It was in the following autumn of 1940 that the enemy began his mass attacks from the air which wrought havoc with particular intensity on the London book trade, demolishing publishing offices, bookshops, printing, binding works, and warehouses crowded with old and new stock, and gradually disorganising production and distribution in all directions. One of the first victims in the trade was Bumpus's, in Oxford Street, who counted themselves fortunate that September to escape with a time-bomb which, though it crashed right through to the basement, blasting a trail of wreckage on its way, was successfully dealt with by the bomb-disposal squad, J. G. Wilson meantime conducting the business over which he had presided for so many years from an office hospitably provided by a near-by bank. Another time-bomb during the same month similarly expelled Geoffrey Faber from his publishing offices in Russell Square, after a similar visitation had temporarily evicted him from his home. That September also saw, among much other damage, the destruction of a million books in a binder's warehouse. Bernard Shaw at the time wrote to his publishers: 'The Germans have done what Constable's have never succeeded in doing. They have disposed of 86,701 sheets of my works in less than 24 hours.'

Several West End shops, known the world over in the market for rare books, became casualties in the following month, when other bookshops in different parts of London were also destroyed.

Stationers' Hall was bombed at the same time, but was to suffer more grievously still in the fiery ordeal at the end of the year. Leslie Chaundy, of Dulau's, lost his life in one of the October raids, members of his staff being safely rescued from the ruins. Some publishing houses had narrow escapes in those early months of the Blitz. One of John Murray's neighbours had a direct hit, but No. 50 Albemarle Street, apart from broken windows and other minor damage, remained intact. Macmillan's, having vowed that nothing would ever force them voluntarily to seek safety elsewhere, had a thousand-pound time-bomb dropped within a few yards of their front door. They had to leave for a few days, but were back again as soon as the bomb had been put out of action.

Thus, like the rest of London and all other stricken towns, the book trade showed how futile was Hitler's plan to crush the spirit of the British people. As a sign of this spirit, and a fighting contribution to the war effort, the Book Trade Spitfire Fund was launched in November with an appeal for £5,000, signed by prominent representatives of every branch of the book world, 'not only as a gesture of our confidence in our country's cause, but as a token of the value we place on books in this land of free discussion and free writing.'

Month after month the bombing continued, reaching its crescendo in the incendiary attack on the night of 29th-30th December, demolishing all Paternoster Row and its allied surroundings. What had once been the heart of the trade was a charred ruin. The house of Longmans, at the sign of the Ship and Black Swan, with its memories of the great Macaulay epoch and Dr. Johnson's day, harking back over more than two centuries to Daniel Defoe and *Robinson Crusoe*; Blackwood's well-known London office at the corner of the Row; Nelson's and the Hutchinson group opposite; Sheed & Ward, and other publishers, as well as many retail booksellers, were burnt-out in a night, together with the great clearing house of Simpkin, Marshall, with no fewer than six million books, ranging over the catalogues of every publisher. This last disaster, wiping out the largest distributing house in the trade, was for the moment the most staggering blow of all, seriously reducing the diminished stocks and supplies of publishers and booksellers throughout the country.

The Row and all around it presented a woeful sight that New Year's eve. From the Warwick Lane end as far as the eye could

reach the whole area had been gutted. Stationers' Hall, already sorely wounded, was still further, but fortunately not irretrievably, damaged. Incendiaries set fire to its ancient roof, which after a succession of blows, crashed to the ground; but the fine oak paneling in the hall itself escaped with scarcely a scratch. Happily, too, the old screen, a lovely example of carved woodwork, had previously been dismantled and deposited in the safe custody of Lady David at Friar Park, Henley-on-Thames. The Court Books and Registers, dating from the sixteenth century, were removed for the duration to the Public Record Office. The Publishers' Association, long established in the basement of Stationers' Hall, had hastily to abandon their offices and find safer quarters for the time being at New Ruskin House, Little Russell Street. Bloomsbury also provided a new home—in Little Russell Street—for the Associated Booksellers, whose offices in the Row were completely destroyed.

All that could be saved from among the charred ruins of Whitaker's seven-storey building in Warwick Lane—home of the *Almanack* and the *Bookseller*, the paper which had been published there for three-quarters of a century—was the safe in which the company's ledgers were preserved. Though its offices were obliterated the *Bookseller* miraculously appeared on 2nd January—'without a hair out of place', as Geoffrey Faber afterwards testified—thanks to its editor, Edmond Segrave, who, by the way, had narrowly escaped with his life in an earlier raid. Other publishers in the neighbourhood included in the casualty list were Eyre & Spottiswoode, Sampson Low, Collins's Bridewell Place branch, Ward Lock, Bagster & Sons, who moved to a fresh address only to be bombed out a second time, Oliphant's, George Gill & Sons, Marshall, Morgan & Scott, and Meiklejohn & Son. Stoneham's, of Ludgate Hill, was wiped out; so too were all the booksellers not only in the Row but in Paternoster Square and Warwick Lane.

Warwick Square, where the Oxford University Press had its London offices and Hodder & Stoughton their headquarters—though their stock was damaged by water—alone stood seemingly unscathed among the smouldering ruins. These famous houses, and the streets in which they stood, to quote from a graphic first-hand impression contributed by 'Petrel'¹ to the *Bookseller* on 2nd January 1941, 'marked only the boundaries of a scene of destruction

¹ A pseudonym concealing the identity of Hubert Wilson, one of London's best-known booksellers.

so complete, so utterly irretrievable, that it held me spellbound. Nowhere were pavements or road surface to be seen. From Warwick Square on the west to Ivy Lane on the east, from the Row nearly to Newgate Street, there lies only an undulating sea of broken yellow bricks. As I picked my way gingerly across from brick to brick, hot gusts of sulphurous fumes from buried fires seeped up between my feet; desultory flames played in the remains of a rafter here or a joist there, and on either side the smoking causeway fell sharply away into cavernous glowing holes, once basements full of stock, now the crematoriums of the City's book world. I looked around me in what was Paternoster Square and recognised nothing but a pillar box, the top beneath my feet; there was nothing left to recognise. Here and there half a wall still stood in dangerous solitude, two or three storeys high, giving form and significance to the desolation, and that was all. I was quite alone (for I had found my way in through a passage unsuspected by the police) and no living thing was to be seen.'

Worth remembering, too, is another personal side-light—from J. D. Stewart, editor and compiler for many years of 'The English Catalogue of Books' issued by *The Publishers' Circular*. 'Twenty-five years ago', he wrote in his introduction to the volume for 1940, 'the compiler completed the Analysis by candle-light in a dug-out in Flanders; this year he has completed it by the light of a hurricane lamp (the electric light having just been extinguished by a bomb explosion) in a London air-raid shelter.'

The Publishers' Association estimated that in all the raids up to the early part of 1941 more than twenty million volumes were destroyed. The holocaust was part of Germany's so-called 'reprisal' raids on centres of English culture. 'All these treasures', declared the *Borsen Zeitung*, after triumphantly recording the damage done to the Cathedral library at Exeter, 'are now only historic memories; our airmen know how to find them out.' Nazi propaganda did its best to persuade the neutral countries after the destruction of Paternoster Row that the British book trade had been brought to a standstill. The trade, however, soon gave the lie to this. Every branch in it was immediately stimulated by the blow to mutual aid and activity. Early on the morning after the great fire, for instance, Simpkin's old rivals, W. H. Smith & Son, and others, rushed to the rescue, helping as far as possible to mitigate the blow. The business was saved and revived by a group of publishers, and

is now operated as a non-profit-making concern. All the burnt-out publishers had meantime taken steps to carry on. Most of them had re-established themselves elsewhere within a fortnight, and were able, to a surprising extent—considering all the war-time conditions—to make good their losses. Longmans, for example re-issued one and a half million books within four months of their stock being destroyed.

But, as the war dragged on, it became more and more difficult to get books printed and bound. In many departments of letters the dearth became a famine. The ranks of skilled labour shrank still further; the paper-ration was reduced to $37\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of pre-war consumption; and more enemy raids, culminating in the devilries of flying bombs and rockets that fell without warning, added to the heavy casualties already suffered by the trade. More well-known landmarks disappeared: Cassell's in La Belle Sauvage;¹ the bookshops and bygone publishing houses in Ludgate Hill mentioned in an earlier chapter; and Blackie's, close-by, in Old Bailey, were all razed to the ground—but they all continued publishing, strong in their vocation, from other vulnerable addresses. Harrap's in High Holborn lost its two top floors from a rain of incendiary bombs in January 1941. The bookshop of Jones & Evans in Queen Street, Cheapside, was burnt out in the following spring; Methuen's in Essex Street not only had a direct hit which wrecked its basement and much of its stock, but also suffered severely from blast due to other near-by bombs which shattered the buildings facing the ruins of St. Clement Dane's at one end of the street, and demolished the offices of Secker and Warburg and the Quality Press at the other. Hodder & Stoughton, who had taken over St. Hugh's School at Bickley, were followed to their new quarters by the *Luftwaffe* and so completely shattered that they were glad to return to their old home in Warwick Square. Collins, after losing their Bridewell Place warehouse, had their London editorial headquarters wrecked by one of the later bombs on Pall Mall.

If Germany sowed the wind with these venomous raids she reaped the whirlwind in the closing phases of the struggle, when Allied bombers, attacking Leipzig and smashing the Nazi war machine in all its parts before the advance of the victorious armies,

¹ Cassell's re-established themselves with undiminished vigour and enterprise at St. Andrews Hill, Queen Victoria Street, publishing there, among many other notable works, Winston Churchill's monumental work on the Second World War.

reduced the Borsenverein, headquarters of the whole German book trade, to little more than a heap of rubble. This tragic chapter in the history of bookselling was regretted by publishers and booksellers at home and abroad who, though aware of the evil uses to which it had been put by Nazi dominance, remembered the debt they owed in the past to the most highly organised industry of its kind in existence.

Meantime in England, such was the unexpected and paradoxical result of all these hazardous and chaotic conditions, that the book trade as a whole was never so prosperous—or would have been if allowed to keep its profits. The freedom from the Purchase Tax had helped to make books more popular than ever as an anodyne for those whose chief desire was to escape for a while from harsh realities, like Lawrence of Arabia reading his pocket Aristophanes in the desert during the first World War. The wholesale destruction of the classics, educational, and standard works made every surviving copy eagerly sought for. It was stated by the Publishers' Association in the spring of 1944 that nine new books out of every ten were over-subscribed. Booksellers, who in pre-war days were puzzled to know what they should add to their crowded shelves from an overflowing abundance, were now rationed by publishers unable to meet half their demands. There were, of course, difficulties of allocation, but these were dealt with as fairly as possible, and the methods adopted were, after a time, approved by the retailers.

As in the Four Years War the fighting forces needed vast supplies in all the scattered theatres of operations. *The Times*, as before, contributed its happily-selected extracts from literary masterpieces. Many voluntary organisations sent ton-loads of books, old and new. Valuable help came through the British Publishers' Guild, a co-operative body sponsored by the Publishers' Association and based on the 'Penguin' idea. Their sixpenny reprints, issued through the Guild by various publishers, had already established themselves when war broke out, and were now to prove immensely popular with the troops. Concentrating for the time being on this service, and working in conjunction with the War Office, the British Publishers' Guild kept the forces supplied with as many editions of these paper-bound books as possible. At the request of the Foreign Office, after Germany's defeat, similar supplies were despatched to our men and women in the occupied zone.

Throughout the War the demand for British literature in other

countries was remarkable. It was fostered by the British Council, who, from the outset of its unobtrusive work, had recognised the value of books as our best ambassadors for propagating the truth about British ideals and the British way of life. In the spring of 1940 the Books and Periodicals Committee of the Council, under the chairmanship of Stanley Unwin, initiated an ingenious scheme for overcoming the economy restrictions abroad and other handicaps which had retarded this work, thereby developing its activities in all parts of the globe.

One of the British Council's representatives, John Hadfield, of Dent's editorial staff, and among London's best-known bookmen, returned from his war-time crusading in the Middle East—which nearly cost him his life through enemy action at sea—to become Director of the newly constituted National Book League. This was in 1944, when the National Book Council, under the presidency of the Poet Laureate, took what John Masfield described as its momentous step forward, broadening its constitution, changing its name and adopting a great progressive plan for development. Its aims, among other things, were to bring home wider understanding of the mission of books by means of a greatly increased membership, the formation of regional and local branches in the Dominions and other parts of the world, and by extending the services already rendered by the National Book Council in its varied activities. Maurice Marston, to whom was due a large part of the credit for much of the work already done, remained as General Secretary.

The N.B.C. had long outgrown its cramped home in Covent Garden. The National Book League chose its headquarters in a nobler setting in Albemarle Street, the Queen Anne house at No. 7 which had once been the headquarters of Grillon's Club, at which political leaders of all parties met during the first half of the nineteenth century, and later became the home of that celebrated society of book collectors, the Roxburghe Club. No. 7 Albemarle Street—just across the road from John Murray's historic house at No. 50—had been sadly disfigured by blast during one of the early raids, but the damage was mainly superficial. A fund was raised both for its renovation and re-equipment to convert it into a house of character and dignity, and a worthy centre of the literary life of the nation.

The Book Tokens Scheme, which owed its inception to Harold

Raymond, and its inauguration to the Associated Booksellers under the administration of the National Book Council in 1932, had proved a remarkable success. When war conditions made suitable gifts harder to find in other shops it solved the present-buying problems for many thousands of harassed shoppers, incidentally demonstrating the value of bookshops to the community and playing no small part in the war-time awakening of popular interest in literature. In 1943, after a record year in which more than a million and a quarter Tokens were sold, it was decided that the time had come to place the scheme on a regularised commercial footing. The Book Tokens Committee of the N.B.C. then became Book Tokens Limited, and a company was registered in March of that year to operate the scheme on behalf of the Associated Booksellers, arrangements being made for its administration to be carried on as before.

With the demand at home ever growing as rapidly as supplies diminished—and with vanishing hopes of replacing them—the stable publishing houses, though no longer worried by the bogey of the best-seller, which in this paradoxical world could be more embarrassing than welcome, watched with grave misgivings their dwindling stocks of all those reputable books on which they had so laboriously built up their lists. They had a grievance too, that while, as old-established quota publishers, they were only entitled to a fixed and wholly inadequate proportion of the paper they used in 1939, brand-new publishers—and scores of them now ventured into this tempting field—were allowed to buy as much so-called 'free paper' as they could secure in the open market.

On most of our authors war conditions pressed heavily. Even the most eminent and public-spirited among them had reason for murmuring against inequalities of sacrifice. The life of the average book was brief enough in normal times. Now it was shorter than ever. Most authors' hopes of new editions vanished for the duration. As a result of further representations to the Government departments the paper ration for book publishers was increased during 1945 to 65 per cent, but with an urgent appeal from the Board of Trade for 'a real effort to ensure that the greatest possible amount is set aside for export'. The export drive, which the publishers loyally stimulated to meet both the needs of the Board of Trade and spread the knowledge of British life and literature oversea, brought little comfort to the writer, who knew that every copy of

his book switched to the export market meant a loss in royalty over home sales, estimated by D. Kilham Roberts, Secretary-General of the Authors Society, as anything from 40 to 80 per cent.

The loss to literature itself was incalculable. The number of new books published in 1944 had dropped to nearly a third of the total issued during the peak year of 1937: a salutary drop, no doubt, but too sudden for war-time's abnormal needs, and crippling in some departments. Educational books, which totalled 1,350 in 1939, fell to 374 in 1944; and the free flow of classics gradually dried up. Poetry and drama fell from a total of 535 new books in 1939 to 328 in 1944; biography and memoirs from 689 to 252, travel from 311 to 78; fiction from 4,222 to 1,255.

The demand for historical as well as biographical literature was particularly marked, books by G. M. Trevelyan, H. A. L. Fisher, and Arthur Bryant, for example, being immensely popular. The trend towards serious reading, one of the significant signs of change in public taste, was due not only to the War, but also to the cumulative effects of wider education. Army mechanisation, too, influenced the sales of technical books, leaving its mark on the reading habits of countless men.

In the prevailing scarcity the public accepted without question second-hand copies of all kinds of works, English and foreign. The presence in this country of so many Allied troops and refugees from abroad largely accounted for the vast quantities of second-hand foreign books distributed throughout the War. There was a crying need also for books on languages. Salvage drives played no small part in helping to satisfy this hunger. It was estimated that as many as some 150 million volumes were collected in this way. Many millions more were handed in at post-offices for the benefit of our troops. Nearly every bookshop collected for the hospitals. Gifts poured in from the highest to the lowest, headed by the King and Queen, whose contributions in two successive years included copies of Boswell's *Johnson*, and Pepys's *Diary*, for the libraries of our Prisoners of War Camps.

The American troops stationed over here, eager to fit themselves into their new surroundings, were great book buyers. English publishers, realising that mutual 'lease and lend' of literature between this country and the United States was no less necessary to the well-being of democracy than mutual aid in arms, made a point not only of introducing fresh American writers to British readers

but also of publishing whole series of up-to-date books on our national history, our institutions, our countryside, and the British way of life generally. Perhaps the most popular of these was Adprint's 'Britain in Pictures' series, of which several million copies were sold under the Collins imprint.

The most fruitful contribution towards mutual understanding between Britain and the United States was the 'Books Across the Sea' movement, inaugurated in 1941, when a small collection of seventy new American books, unknown in this country, was sent as a gift by Mrs. May Lamberton Becker—'Readers Guide' of the *New York Herald Tribune*—to a group of American and British friends anxious to explain and understand the real America behind the Hollywood façade. The interest roused by this timely gesture led to the formation of the first 'Books Across the Sea Circle' in London before the ending of that year, a corresponding selection of British 'Ambassador Books' being sent in exchange to New York. The movement grew on both sides of the Atlantic, and a regular exchange of books built up rich and varied reference libraries in both capitals. A parallel exchange followed between Books Across the Sea Circles in Boston, Mass.; and Edinburgh, Scotland. A happy choice was made when T. S. Eliot—like Henry James, a citizen of both countries, and an author of international repute—became President of the English Circle in 1943. By that time the society's reading-room in Aldwych House was firmly established in its missionary work, with a comprehensive library of new American books, most of them hitherto unknown over here, and many revealing unfamiliar aspects of transatlantic life. Its usefulness was shown by the keenness with which it was consulted by writers, lecturers, librarian and booksellers from many parts of the kingdom, as well as by the reading public.

The general trend of English publishing during these war years can be traced in the 'quantitative multitudinosity', in Sir Ernest Barker's phrase, of the detailed analysis reprinted, by permission, from the *Bookseller* (see pp. 360–361).

The wide dispersal of the population through the long ordeal improved the fortunes and standing of most bookshops. It also increased their numbers everywhere, just as the war-time boom in books had encouraged many newcomers into publishing. A wise move was made by the Associated Booksellers to assist the trade to consolidate its gains and earn its rightful place in the world. 'Retail

bookselling of the future', it was urged, 'will demand the utmost proficiency in the bookshop.' Already, in 1939, the Council of the Associated Booksellers had approved an educational course, but six years of war had held it in abeyance. This scheme, appealing to all booksellers and publishers, and their assistants, as well as to any new arrivals in the trade, was among the early plans of peace to come into operation. A comprehensive syllabus was planned for London by the Association's Education Board under the chairmanship of J. G. Wilson, with 'Bookshop Practice and English Literature' as the first-year course for 1945-6. 'The coming together of bookshop and publishers' staffs for study and discussion', to quote from the syllabus, 'will, it is believed, bring a new spirit of endeavour into our work: the expression of personality, not the uniformity of a machine. From a pooling of ideas will arise a clearer outlook and a conception of practical routine, free and adaptable to possible changes in our many-sided business. The need is for a proficiency that will give status to assistants and others engaged in the book trade, assuring better wages and increased enjoyment of labours, which are of first importance to the community.'

Held at the Regent Street Polytechnic, with lectures by experts, free discussions, and small exhibitions, the first-year course proved an unqualified success. It was followed by a second-year course (1946-7) on 'The Making of Books and English Literature', tracing the history of the subject from the narrative writers of early years to the experimental work of our own day, 'so that we who display and convey the printed word to the reader may know what we are handling; and appreciate for ourselves the history and significance of the goods we sell.' The series, which owed much of its success to the devoted services of S. R. Fuller, of Truslove and Hanson, was completed with a third-year course in April, 1948. So successful was this far-sighted scheme in London, so full of promise for the well-being of the whole trade, that similar courses were arranged by the Associated Booksellers' branches at Bristol, Brighton, Leicester, Nottingham, Glasgow, and elsewhere.

A word may be added about auction sales. Prices maintained a high level during the War. This was especially marked in connexion with books of the modern private presses, Kelmscott, Doves, Gregynog, Ashendene, Nonesuch and Golden Cockerel. Only the last named continued in regular production throughout, despite

the fact that both its partners at that time, Christopher Sandford and Owen Rutter, served full-time with the colours—'nourishing the cockerel', as it was afterwards testified, 'only by the light of their midnight oil.' The double task proved too big a strain. Christopher Sandford was invalided from the Army; Owen Rutter, after twelve years scholarly collaboration in all the Golden Cockerel's undertakings, died in harness, on 1st August 1944.

It was during those catastrophic years that Macmillan's celebrated their hundredth birthday, marking the occasion with a masterly character-study by Charles Morgan, 'The House of Macmillan (1843-1943)', a collective portrait of hereditary publishers shown against the background of their times. The firm had suffered heavy personal losses several years previously, when all three directors of their generation died within a few months of one another: Sir Frederick himself, the founder's eldest son; George A. Macmillan (son of Alexander Macmillan), also closely associated with the Hellenic Society, the British School at Athens and other learned societies; and Maurice Crawford Macmillan (Daniel Macmillan's second son), who had been classical master for six years at St. Paul's School. The head of the house to-day is another Daniel Macmillan (son of Maurice Crawford), whose younger brother Harold, besides taking an active part in the business on the board of directors, has long been a man of mark in politics. Harold Macmillan, M.P., who was wounded three times in the first World War, joined the Coalition Government as a Conservative during the War of 1939-45, becoming successively Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, Minister Resident at Allied Headquarters in North-West Africa, and Secretary for Air. Another director had meanwhile been added to the board in Lovat Dickson, who parted with his own small publishing enterprise in Bedford Street to join Macmillan's in 1938. Lovat Dickson, himself an author of repute, will be remembered as a publisher for the books which he issued of 'Grey Owl', Jules Romaines, and others. His business was taken over by Peter Davies Limited.

Scholarly publishing also sustained a blow on the eve of the second World War by the death in August, 1939, of Frank Sidgwick, followed shortly afterwards by that of his partner, R. B. McKerrow. Sidgwick, on leaving Cambridge, had entered publishing as junior partner to A. H. Bullen. Five years later, in 1907, he established the firm of Sidgwick and Jackson, which soon played a considerable

part in the revival of interest in the work of living poets. Their two anthologies of *Poems of To-day*, compiled for schools by the English Association, sold by the hundred thousand. Their list also included the poems of Rupert Brooke and John Drinkwater; H. Granville Barker's plays; the early narrative verse and poems of John Masefield; and the novels of the senior publisher's sister, Ethel Sidgwick. Frank Sidgwick himself wrote two novels, and had a pleasant gift of light verse. His partner, R. C. Jackson, like Rupert Brooke, whose poems he had helped to publish, fell in the first World War. R. B. McKerrow, Sidgwick's later co-director, was another scholar who was also a practical publisher. Under his editorship the firm published the *Review of English Studies*, as well as his complete edition of Thomas Nashe, in five volumes. Younger Sidgwicks and McKerrows were left to carry on the business.

In 1938 died George G. Harrap, founder of the firm which, as mentioned on p. 335, had forged ahead in all departments since it made its modest beginnings in 1901. The proudest day in the founder's career came with the opening in 1935 of Harrap's new house in High Holborn by Winston Churchill, whose *Life of Marlborough* in four volumes bore his imprint. The future Prime Minister paid tribute on that occasion to 'the long, steady, sure, unarrested progress by which the firm and house of Harrap have risen to the high and honoured place which they occupy in the publishing world of Great Britain.' George Harrap was succeeded as chairman by his old partner, G. Oliver Anderson. Walter Harrap, a director and son of the founder, has long taken an active part in book trade politics. As one of the war-time Presidents of the Publishers' Association—succeeding Geoffrey Faber in that office—he helped to steer the craft through the stormiest years of its history. The British Publishers' Guild, which he had founded, played a valuable part in the campaign for relieving the book famine which persisted through the Six Years War.

A number of other prominent figures disappeared from the world of books during that struggle. In March, 1940, the death was announced of Sir Hubert Longman, who had been a partner in our oldest publishing house for sixty years. He was born in 1856. Robert Stuart Chambers, Chairman of W. & R. Chambers, a great-grandson of the founder of that firm, was only a little over fifty years of age when he died in the same year as Sir Hubert

Longman, after devoting his professional life to his business, and assisting in editing *Chambers's Journal*.

Guy H. Bickers, another untimely loss, died in his fifty-eighth year in 1942. He had been managing director of George Bell & Sons for many years; had served two terms on the Council of the Publishers' Association, and will not be forgotten for his unselfish work for the trade as a whole. Another personality passed a few months later in Herbert Edward Alden, one of the leading lights of the retail trade, long associated with Simpkin, Marshall as managing director and later as chairman, as well as a tower of strength to the Associated Booksellers of Great Britain and Ireland, contributing largely to the closer co-operation between that body and the Publishers' Association.

In the spring of the same year (1942) died George William Blackwood, publisher and editor of *Blackwood's Magazine*, at the age of sixty-six, great-grandson, as already recorded, of the founder of the firm. His brother and co-director succeeded him as editor of *Maga*.

Thornton Butterworth, who died in the following autumn, will be remembered as the original publisher of Winston Churchill's series on 'The World Crisis'; Lady Oxford's *Autobiography of Margot Asquith*, and other popular memoirs, besides many noteworthy works in fiction and travel. He also gave a new lease of life to the Home University Library, continuing that admirable series (originally issued by William and Norgate) with a number of supplementary volumes. When his publishing career ended in 1941 the Home University Library was taken over and expanded by the Oxford University Press. Winston Churchill's volumes on 'The World Crisis' came under Macmillan's imprint. Most of the publisher's other stock and copyrights were bought by Eyre and Spottiswoode, who moved at the same time into his office in Bedford Street as their war-time headquarters.

P. P. Howe, who was associated with Martin Secker in the distinguished chapter in English publishing referred to on p. 326, was not more than fifty-seven when he died at the end of March, 1944. His own modest ventures in publishing are forgotten, but he will live as the leading Hazlitt scholar of his time, as well as the author of discerning volumes on Synge and Shaw. His scholarly life and editions of Hazlitt are standard works.

Eight months later came the death of C. S. Evans, head of

Heinemann's for many years. As mentioned on p. 318, he became managing director of the firm, with Theodore Byard as chairman, after Heinemann's death. When Byard, who had played an active part in furthering the best interests of the book trade, died in 1931, Evans succeeded him as chairman as well. Something of an author himself, and at one time an elementary schoolmaster, he possessed not a little of the founder's own flair for fiction and other branches of letters, and added many successes to the Heinemann list.

T. Werner Laurie, who had been with Fisher Unwin before starting his own publishing business in 1904, died before the end of the War. 'London is rapidly becoming impossible', he wrote to the present author in the spring of 1941. 'I go to the office daily although I am seventy-five and remember working in my father's educational publishing office sixty years ago. Some day I hope to retire.' George Moore and Upton Sinclair were among his authors.

Early in 1945 came the death in his seventy-seventh year of Alexander Moring, who made a pioneer contribution to fine book production with the De La More Press, founded in 1898. With his King's Library, King's Classics, and other productions, he had helped to raise the standard when good printing and beautiful books were not so common as they are to-day. A master craftsman died in the following spring in Charles Harry St. John Hornby, whose Ashendene Press, the most absorbing interest of his busy life, came to share the fame of the Kelmscott and Doves Presses among book collectors everywhere. He lived to be seventy-eight.

The death roll of 1945 also included the name of Lieutenant-Colonel W. A. Collins, the fourth William Collins in direct succession to the founder of the firm. He had won the D.S.O. in France during the first World War. Afterwards, as head of the business, and in association with his brother, Sir Godfrey P. Collins, subsequently Secretary of State for Scotland, he had seen the publishing side of William Collins, Sons & Co., expand in all its varied branches. Another William (W. A. R. Collins), his eldest son, succeeded him, and in January, 1948, inaugurated *Collins' Children's Magazine*, which promises to mark an epoch in literature for young people.

Another personality passed away in the autumn of 1946 when C. W. Chamberlain, head of Methuen's, with whom his whole life had been bound up, died shortly after his final retirement. Methuen's had seen many changes since they last figured in these

pages. Their amalgamation with Chapman and Hall had taken place in 1939 under the chairmanship of Philip Inman, now Lord Inman; and L. A. G. Strong had become a director. During the Second World War, which found Chamberlain back in his old firm after his temporary retirement, I. J. Pitman, of Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, and Sir Stanley Unwin, also joined the board, but Chamberlain continued as chairman and managing director.

H. V. Morton, whose books he published, paid a fine tribute to his memory in *The Times*:

'As a friend he was a rock of sincerity and loyalty, a man of sometimes shattering candour and honesty of mind. Beneath a manner which has been known to unnerve many a timid young author he concealed an almost feminine warmth of feeling and emotion. As a publisher he was gifted with a flair so marked that it seemed like second sight. His return from retirement to steer the business through the difficult years of the War had something of the knight errant about it, and no one who worked with him during the Blitz and later will ever forget the courage of a man no longer young. . . .'

Chamberlain was succeeded as managing director by J. A. White, who had been with the firm for over twenty years. Sir Stanley Unwin resigned from the board in the following summer.

Fresh names were meantime coming forward, continuing the spirit of continuity and tradition of linking up older houses with the new. Michael Joseph had useful publishing experience behind him, as well as inside knowledge of literary agency work, when he founded his own firm in 1935. Limitations of space prevent justice being done to his own books, or the brilliant group of authors he has since gathered round him, with Robert Lusty—now Chairman of the National Book League—as second string and co-director. Robert Hale, whose company was formed in 1936, had been managing director of Jarrolds (London) and a director of Hutchinson's and several of their associated firms. Andrew Dakers, who, like Michael Joseph, entered publishing by way of literary agency—as well as journalism and authorship—was at one time managing director of Methuen's, after being on the board of Rich & Cowan. He has now established his own publishing house in Store Street. Lindsay Drummond, who opened his offices in Buckingham Street,

Strand, in 1937, was formerly a director of John Lane's, in Vigo Street. His present address is in Guilford Place, W.C.1.

These and other new imprints of the nineteen-thirties survived the shocks of the second World War, when the topsy-turvy conditions of publishing tempted a whole host of adventurous newcomers into the field. John Lehmann, whose post-war imprint is one of the latest to appear, was formerly Leonard Woolf's partner in the Hogarth Press, as well as the founder and editor of *New Writing*.

The Second World War had ended with anything but peace in the world of books. More paper was allowed—it went up to 85 per cent of normal supplies by the summer of 1946, but labour shortage in paper mills, binding and printing works caused exasperating bottle-necks of delay in production. Binders alone, it was complained, took as long as four months to bind a book which, before the war, could have been bound in four days. Publishers, though admitting it was pleasant, from a business point of view, to know that they would sell all their books without running any financial risk, longed for the return of healthier and more adventurous days. 'Publishing', wrote one of the most enterprising among them to the present writer in 1944, 'loses half its excitement when one is publishing the same authors year after year, with virtually no new experiments.'

Rider Haggard once denounced the legend that authors and publishers were natural enemies as one of those generalities which convey a very false impression. 'What is more', he added, 'authors and publishers would be great fools if they were enemies, seeing that they are united in the bonds of a matrimony from which there is no possible escape.' Yet, from the very nature of a craft which is not only more engrossing and more difficult than any purely commercial pursuit, there will always be disappointed authors too ready to think the worst of their publishers, just as, doubtless, there will also be deserted publishers who have reason to think ill of certain authors. There are black sheep in both flocks, but publishing, at its best, remains a great and enviable calling.

THE LEARNED PRESSES

THE learned presses stand in a class apart. Here and there in the course of this narrative some mention is made of their activities, but the part which the Oxford and Cambridge Universities have played demands a chapter to itself. Neither press has any shareholders. Profits from the sales of such perennial best-sellers as the Bible and Prayer Books, in all their diverse editions, are largely devoted to unremunerative works of intrinsic value.

Oxford printed books more than forty years before John Siberch set up the first press in Cambridge, but printing was not permanently established at either university until towards the end of Elizabeth's reign. To Oxford, however, belongs the unique distinction of being able to produce a list of practically all its publications for over 340 years. With a press from Cologne, Oxford was Caxton's first typographical rival in England, and, indeed, produced a book bearing a date, which, on the face of it, was printed nine years before Caxton's *Dictes of the Philosophers*. The battle once waged about the date of the '1468' volume (the treatise of Tyrannius Rufinus on the Apostles' Creed, here ascribed to St. Jerome) is an oft-told tale, and led to almost as many arguments as have been put forward in the older controversy as to whether printing was 'invented' in Holland or Germany. Most authorities are now agreed, however, that 1468 is an error for 1478 (an X having dropped out of 'MCCCCLXXVIII.'). Caxton's Oxford rival did not trouble him long, for the press in the university town suddenly ceased operations in 1486, about the time that the printing by the mysterious school-master at St. Albans also came to an end.

Twenty-one years ensued and then, for a period of about fourteen months, printers from abroad were again at work at Oxford. The suppression of the Oxford Press by Wolsey led to another long interval of inactivity. It was not until 1585 that the Press was permanently established. 'Late in the reign of Elizabeth', writes Ingram in his *Memorials of Oxford*, 'the Earl of Leicester, being then Chancellor of the University, had the good sense and spirit to revive and reorganise its typography. Its sole expense, a new press, was

erected; a fit person was specially appointed printer to the University; and in 1585 came forth in Latin the first fruits of the establishment, *Moral Questions about Aristotle's Ethics*, by John Case, Fellow of St. John's; dedicated, with great propriety, to the Chancellor.' From that date the Press was kept in constant work. Before the close of the sixteenth century Joseph Barnes, the 'fit person' referred to, had published between seventy and eighty books, 'many of them of high character, and most of them respectable in their style of execution.' The charter of privileges in 1632 gave the University direct control of the printing, but as yet there are few signs of actual academical interest or interference, and the various printers were still left to exercise their trade in hired buildings. The great patron of the Press at this period was Archbishop Laud, who was the first to encourage the University to raise the establishment into a great national institution. With the downfall of Laud came the Rebellion, with its numbing influence upon learning; and the Oxford Press, whose printers—with Oxford itself as the headquarters of the King—were deeply implicated on the royal side, had some difficulty in holding its ground. That it was not completely crushed was mainly due to Bishop Fell, of the familiar verse beginning:

I do not love thee, Dr. Fell—

Taking up the work begun by Laud, Dr. Fell checked every attempt that was made by its rivals to reduce its importance. In the Civil War he bore arms for the King in the garrison of Oxford, and, receiving ecclesiastical promotion after the Restoration, became Vice-Chancellor of the University in 1666. It was in 1666 that he presented some of the sets of types which, with the generous gifts of Junius, laid the foundation of the Oxford University Foundry as it exists to-day. Fell worked hard and gave large sums of money for the development of the Press, both in improving its mechanical resources and providing it with scholarly editions of classical and other works. Thomas Guy's relations with Oxford, and the troubles with the London Stationers' Company at this period, have been dealt with in our general survey of publishing. In spite of these troubles the Oxford Press prospered, and after being carried on for some years in the old House of Congregation in St. Mary's Church, was removed to the floor of the Sheldonian, where it had its home until 1713.

The next important chapter in the story of the Oxford Press begins with Clarendon's gift of the copyright of his *History of the Rebellion*. It was mainly with the profits accruing from the sale of this classic that the University was provided with the first building erected for the specific purpose of carrying on its printing business—hence the name of the Clarendon Press. The removal from the Sheldonian took place in 1713, and the new printing house began its operations in October of that year. The first Clarendon Building, in Broad Street, was designed by Vanbrugh; everybody familiar with Oxford knows it by sight. Another period of slackness settled upon the institution in the eighteenth century, and it was left to the administrative zeal and judgment of Sir William Blackstone to put fresh life into its work. Thenceforward there is little but progress and prosperity to record. In 1830, the business increasing beyond the capacities of the Broad Street house, a move was made to the existing building in Walton Street.

The name of the Oxford Press has been associated with the trade in Bibles for nearly three centuries. The Revised Version is the joint property of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, which voted £20,000 to the expenses of publication, but the copyrights of the Authorised Version and of the Book of Common Prayer are vested in the Crown, authority to print them in England being granted by charter to Oxford and Cambridge Universities and by licence to the King's Printer. There was an unprecedented run on the Oxford University Press Warehouse on 17th May 1881, when the Revised New Testament was published. Over a million copies were sold within the first twenty-four hours. Bribery and corruption were tried in vain by several of the more unscrupulous American firms to secure advance sheets. So keen was the interest that the *Times* of Chicago printed the complete New Testament as a supplement, having had the whole of it telegraphed for the purpose from New York immediately the copies were landed from England.

The Oxford India paper, which has revolutionised both the Bible and Prayer-book trade, is the special pride of the University Press. The story of its discovery bears re-telling. About a century ago an Oxford graduate returned from India with a small fold of paper remarkably thin, but at the same time opaque and tough. He presented the paper to the University Press, and a few Bibles, half the usual thickness, were printed from it. As much as £20 each was offered for them, but no copies were sold. One was presented to

Queen Victoria. Futile efforts were made to trace the paper to its source. Even Gladstone was asked if he could throw any light on the matter, and he suggested a search in Japan, but though a paper thin and tough enough was found there, it was too transparent to permit of printing on both sides. The search was gradually abandoned, and the paper lost sight of until a copy of the book reached the hands of the late Henry Frowde. This was in 1874. Henry Frowde had only taken over the management of the London business of the Clarendon Press at the close of the preceding year; and experiments were at once started at the Wolvercote Mills, two miles away on the river from Oxford, with the object of manufacturing a similar paper. After several failures came success. On 25th August 1875 an edition of the Bible was published similar in every respect to the two dozen copies printed in 1842. A quarter of a million copies were sold within a few weeks. No workman at the Wolvercote Mills is allowed to understand more than one stage of the process of manufacture. The paper remains a mechanical mystery.

The mills themselves, it should be added, have a history. They date back to the period of Dr. Fell, who encouraged the fitting up of the place by George Edwards, a 'cutter in wood of the great letters, who engraved many other things made use of in the printing of books, and had a talent in maps, although done with his left hand.' 'Some of the best paper made in England is made at Wolvercote Mill', wrote Hearn, as far back as 1728; and its reputation stands higher than ever to-day.

Besides belonging to the University, and mindful of its dignity and traditions, the Oxford Press is a vast business concern which succeeds in keeping itself abreast of the times. Apart from employing its own builders, engineers, and the like, and manufacturing its paper, the Oxford Press does its own ink-making, type-founding, electrotyping, lithographing, and all kinds of 'fancy printing and bookbinding'. In other words it makes its books from the raw material; and it prints them in something like sixty different tongues—each requiring a separate kind of type—without reckoning the countless languages and dialects for which Roman type serves.

Though the Oxford Press had a Bible warehouse in London before 1770, it was not until 1880 that it undertook the distribution in the metropolis of its secular books. These were formerly sold through Macmillan's. Henry Frowde, who had been in charge of the Bible

warehouse, now became sole publisher to the University, an office which he continued to hold, in the words of the official historian, 'with great skill, devotion, and success',¹ until his retirement in 1913. He was succeeded by Humphrey Milford, who completed, all told, some forty-five years in the same service, before retiring in 1945. Throughout that period the multifarious activities of the Oxford Press increased in all directions. When Humphrey Milford had completed twenty-five years' work the delegates of the Press—again quoting from the official history—recorded in their minutes that 'To Mr. Milford is due, in an eminent degree, the credit for the gradual and prudent extension of the foundations of the business, which has made its present prosperity and which justifies confidence in its future.' The services of the Press to the cause of scholarship and letters during this period were publicly acknowledged on more than one occasion: at the luncheon in 1924, for example, to celebrate the opening of the new publishing offices in Warwick Square, when Lord Balfour, Lord Oxford, Lord Curzon of Kedleston, and the Archbishop of Canterbury paid tributes which were afterwards printed in Japan in a volume of *Models of Eloquence*. The completion of the *Oxford English Dictionary* in 1928 was another occasion of the kind, remembered for the Prime Minister's speech in honour of what he described as 'the greatest enterprise of its kind in history'. Among the Oxford distinctions conferred in commemoration of that event were the honorary degrees of Doctor of Letters received by Humphrey Milford as Publisher; R. W. Chapman, as Secretary to the Delegates; and J. Johnson as Printer to the University. Humphrey Milford was knighted in 1936. He was succeeded as Publisher by Geoffrey F. C. Cumberlege, who won the D.S.O. and the M.C. in the first World War, and, joining the Oxford University Press in 1919, had been manager both in its Bombay and New York branches.

Before the days of William Pitt, with whose name it is so closely associated, the Cambridge University Press, like that of its sister university, suffered many vicissitudes. The facts connected with its earlier history—the work of John Siverch, who set up the first press in Cambridge in 1521, the struggle against ecclesiastical prejudice and commercial jealousy which succeeded the appointment of Thomas Thomas as University printer some sixty years later, and the ups and downs of the Press during the seventeenth and eighteenth

¹ *The Oxford University Press, 1468-1926.*

centuries, form one of the most striking chapters in the history of the trade. We have already dealt with the part played by the Universities in the organisation and development of bookselling in the days before the introduction of printing. Oxford, as stated on p. 369, had produced printed books more than forty years before Siberch came to Cambridge. Little has been discovered about Siberch, but he probably came from Cologne, and there is no doubt that he was a friend of Erasmus, staying in his house when lecturing at Cambridge on St. Jerome. Erasmus greets him in a letter, written from Basle on Christmas Day, 1525, to Dr. Robert Aldrich, of King's College, afterwards Bishop of Carlisle. The printer had apparently ceased operations at Cambridge when Erasmus' letter was written. At all events we lose sight of him after 1523, and the nine or ten books recorded under his name are the only fruits we have of the two or three years' work of his press. He styled himself the first Greek printer in England, and one of his earliest productions, a sermon of Augustine, contains a little Greek matter which represents the earliest appearance of Greek metal types in England. But he left no book entirely printed in that character.

Siberch worked his press at the sign of the Arma Regia (a fact which explains how he stamped the Royal Arms of England and France on the sides of some of his books), facing St. Michael's Church, now part of Gonville and Caius College. The Bodleian contains a splendid example of his edition of Linacre's Latin translation of the *De Temperamentis* of Galen—the prescribed text-book in the medical course of study—a volume printed on vellum in the original binding, and bearing the Royal Arms, the identical copy presented by Linacre to Henry VIII. That monarch in 1534 granted to the University a special licence to appoint from time to time three stationers who were empowered to print all manner of books approved of by the Chancellor and his viceregent, or three doctors, and to sell these and any other works passed by the same censors.

The licensed press was strangely unproductive. After Siberch, there is no record of another book from Cambridge for sixty-two years. The Oxford press was barren for a similar period. The intolerant Church, which, as explained in an earlier chapter, began by countenancing the art, grew fearful of its possibilities, and established a censorship which led to serious deterioration both in the quantity and quality of the books published. Printing, during Mary's reign, was confined as far as possible to members of the

London Stationers' Company, and trade jealousy on the Company's part seems to have had something to do with the delay in re-establishing the press at Cambridge. When Elizabeth had reigned some eighteen or nineteen years, however, the Vice-Chancellor and Heads of the University determined to assert their independence in the matter.

In 1577, Lord Burghley, objecting 'to prejudice the Queen's Grants', discouraged their proposal to restore the art of printing in the University, but they settled the question in 1582 by appointing Thomas Thomas, a Fellow of King's College, as University printer, the first of a long and honourable line which has remained unbroken to the present day. In his very first year of office, however, while printing a new work by William Whitaker, the agents of the Stationers' Company suddenly appeared upon the scene, and seized the whole plant. This summary proceeding roused the spirit of the University, and a formal demand was sent to the Bishop of London (under whose authority the seizure had been made) for the restitution of the property. An urgent appeal was addressed to Burghley at the same time, seeking his aid in safeguarding the University's ancient privileges. The Bishop was John Aylmer, hardened since the time when he watched over the education of Lady Jane Grey, and now distinguished by his zeal against the Puritans. He added insult to injury by describing Thomas Thomas as a 'man utterlie ignorant in printing and pretending to be the printer to the Universitie of Cambridge', and also pointed out the danger to the Commonwealth involved by the activity of a press 'farre from ordinarie research'. There were already fifty-three printers in London, added the Wardens, of the Stationers' Company, and on that account alone a press at Cambridge was less necessary than it had ever been.

On their part, the University authorities stoutly defended their printer, 'whom we know to be a very godly and honest man', but it was not until the following March that Burghley, having been assured as to the validity of the charter of Henry VIII by the Master of the Rolls, Sir Gilbert Gerrard (himself a Cambridge M.A.), wrote authorising the reinstatement of Thomas. Besides being a 'very godly and honest man', and printer to the University, Thomas was an accomplished scholar. He compiled a Latin dictionary so assiduously that his health broke down, and he died shortly after its completion—not, however, before the Stationers' Company had

pirated the work, together with other books printed by him, whereby, to quote the letter which the Vice-Chancellor and Heads wrote to Lord Burghley on the subject, he was 'almost utterly disabled'.

University publishing was never more grievously handicapped than in those days. Besides being opposed by the Church, the sister presses of Oxford and Cambridge were systematically victimised by the unscrupulous booksellers of London, who pirated the University volumes (there was no copyright law to prevent them), and undersold the legitimate publishers. The Universities retaliated by forbidding the local booksellers to buy or sell any books printed in London or elsewhere in England when an edition had already been produced or was in contemplation at either Oxford or Cambridge, 'under pain of perpetual banishment and confiscation of such books', the students being also prohibited the purchase of these editions. That was in 1585-86. The Star Chamber added to the hardships by restricting the number of presses and apprentices at each University to 'one at one tyme at the most'. The Long Parliament abolished the Star Chamber, but fresh restrictions continued to trammel the printing press:

In its earliest days the Cambridge Press had no home of its own. Its work was done at the houses of the University printers. The first attempt to remedy this was made through John Field, who succeeded John Legate the younger in 1655. Field, on behalf of the University, took a lease of the ground near Queens' College, and built the printing house which was in use until the nineteenth century. Another building was added to the north of this in 1696, when, thanks to the energy of Richard Bentley, scholar and critic, and the help of the Duke of Somerset, who had been elected Chancellor in 1689, new life was instilled into the Press. The two buildings were used until 1716, when the more modern house was made over to the Professors of Anatomy and Chemistry, a Grace of the Senate stating that it was of no other use to the University. The Press then confined its operations to the older building, which stood at the corner of Silver Street and Queens' Lane, with a range of warehouses extending eastward from it. Strictly speaking, the name 'Pitt Press' only applies to part of the existing buildings, which were erected in 1831 with the balance of the money subscribed for the statue erected in Hanover Square in honour of Cambridge's illustrious son.

Some of the finest printing in the history of the art was done at

Cambridge during the eighteenth century, when John Baskerville, obtaining leave to send two of his presses and all other requisites, was elected 'one of the Stationers and Printers' of the University for ten years. There he produced his editions of the Bible—one of the most beautifully printed books in the world' in Dibdin's words—and Prayer Book, 'but under such shackles', he wrote to Horace Walpole in 1762, 'as greatly hurt me'. The heavy premiums exacted for the privilege accorded by the syndics deprived Baskerville of any pecuniary reward. 'It is surely a particular hardship', he added in the same letter, 'that I should not get bread in my own country (and it is too late to go abroad) after having acquired the reputation of excelling in the most useful art known to mankind; while every one who excels as a player, fiddler, dancer, etc., not only lives in affluence, but has it in their power to save a fortune.'¹

So disheartened was he by the financial failure of his Bible, that he severed his connexion with the University after its production in 1763. Baskerville afterwards tried to sell his plant to the French Ambassador through his old friend Benjamin Franklin, but without success. Towards the end of his life he produced some of his loveliest books, the series of quarto editions of Latin authors. He died in 1775, and some years later Beaumarchais bought his plant for his complete edition of Voltaire. The Cambridge authorities of his day have been criticised by typographical historians for their treatment of Baskerville, particularly in regard to the exacting terms of their agreement. Admittedly neither the University nor its chief printer, Joseph Bentham, who had been in charge since 1740, was willing to give him a free hand. The official excuse, apparently, was that 'Bentham was naturally jealous of his own position and the Syndics' previous experience of leases granted to outside printers had been unfortunate.'¹

Until 1873 the Cambridge Press had all its publishing in modern times done through the agency of various London firms. In that year it established its own publishing office in Paternoster Row, subsequently moving to Fetter Lane, and later to its present address in Euston Road. In the first instance this branch was conducted by C. J. Clay, University printer from 1854 to 1894; with whom were afterwards associated his sons, John and C. F. Clay. The Press itself is governed by a body of Syndics appointed by the Senate of the University, a system which has persisted for upwards

¹ *A History of the Cambridge University Press, 1521-1921*, S. C. Roberts.

of two centuries. In the spring of 1948 the Syndics appointed R. J. L. Kingsford to be their secretary, in succession to S. C. Roberts—then Master-elect of Pembroke College, Cambridge. Mr. Kingsford who was President of the Publishers' Association in 1943-5, had been assistant secretary to the Syndics from 1922 to 1929, and manager of their London publishing house from 1936.

Like that of Oxford, the Cambridge Press uses its privileges to the full, issuing Bibles and Prayer Books in almost every variety of size and type. One of its historic possessions is a facsimile of the massive Bible originally printed on vellum, and handsomely bound, for the use of William IV. The chief interest attaching to this volume lies in the fact that its first eight pages were taken off the press at Cambridge by Lord Camden (then Chancellor of the University), the Duke of Northumberland (High Steward of the University), the Duke of Cumberland, Prince George of Cambridge, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Hardwicke, and the Vice-Chancellor of the University. As with the Oxford Press, it is impossible within our limits to mention all the outstanding contributions which have been made by Cambridge to every branch of letters in recent years. No record would be adequate, however, without some reference to the great co-operative histories which began in 1902 with the first volume of *The Cambridge Modern History*, and was completed ten years later. This plan has since been adopted in several other fields: *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, *The Cambridge Medieval History*, *The Cambridge History of India*, *The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, *The Cambridge Ancient History*, *The Cambridge History of the British Empire*.

Perhaps the greatest fame of the Cambridge Press, according to S. C. Roberts, in the official history which commemorated the four-hundredth anniversary of Cambridge printing, 'rests upon its mathematical typography'. It has reason to be proud of its high reputation not only in that branch of its work to-day—a branch of printing which obviously calls for exceptional skill—but also for the part it has played in the modern revival of printing in all kinds of literature.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF PUBLISHING AND BOOKSELLING. BY WILLIAM PEET

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'THE largest collection of books devoted to the subjects of book-producing and bookselling in all its many branches', wrote William Peet in introducing his bibliography, 'will be found in the library of the *Börsenverein der Deutschen Buchhändler* at Leipzig. The catalogue of this library is in two vols. (Vol. I, 1885; Vol. II, 1902), and contains several thousands of titles of works in all languages. I am considerably indebted to this catalogue, although I had nearly finished my list before I had the opportunity of consulting it. Works on printing and the production of books are noted only when they contain matter bearing incidentally on publishing or book-selling, while copyright, book-collecting, and the sport of book-hunting are beyond my scope. Works dealing with the freedom of the Press, actions for libel, or prosecutions for publishing blasphemous or seditious books are not systematically included. They form, however, a very large section in the Leipzig catalogue.' When William Peet died at the close of 1916 he left material for a revision and extension of his bibliography. This has been incorporated, and the work brought up to date by F. A. Mumby.

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KING, PHILIP STEPHEN, 1819-1908.—Reminiscences of an Octogenarian. Privately printed. 1905.

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464; *iv*, 242 (1623-1714¹); 6 *S. ii*, 141 (1737-43). *St. Paul's Churchyard*, 5 *S. ix*, 9-10 (1515-87); *xi*, 94 (1548-1738); *xiii*, 489 (1593-1723); *viii*, 461 (1593-1763); *ix*, 97 (1611-52).

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LONDON BOOKSELLERS AND PUBLISHERS, 1700-1750.—*See under Wood, F. T.*

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The first systematic work of its kind.

The British Librarian, 8vo, 1839-42.

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A Booksellers' Rubaiyat. Being verses written by E. V. Lucas and read by

¹ 'This list (1623-1714) is an alphabetical list of London publishers carried down to 1834, but 1714 is the last dated sign mentioned, apparently.' Mr. W. McMurray ('*Notes and Queries*', 11 *S. i*, 402).

him at Methuen & Co.'s Dinner, at which a number of members of the Bookselling Trade were present on 15 November 1912. For Private Circulation only.

MACAULAY, LORD, 1800-59.—The Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay. By Sir G. O. Trevelyan, Bart. 2 vols. 8vo, 1876, and other editions.

See throughout for Macaulay's connexion and transactions with Longmans.

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A Dictionary of Printers and Booksellers in England, Scotland, and Ireland, and of Foreign Printers of English Books, 1557-1640. By H. G. Aldis, Robert Bowes, E. R. M. and C. Dix, E. Gordon Duff, Strickland Gibson, G. J. Gray, R. B. McKerrow, Falconer Madan, and H. R. Plomer. London. Bibliographical Society, 1910.

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MACLEHOSE, J.—Books Published by James Maclehose from 1838 to 1881, and by J. Maclehose & Sons, to 1905. Presented to the Library of the University of Glasgow. With Portrait. 8vo, Glasgow, 1905.

MACMILLAN, DANIEL, 1813-57; MACMILLAN, ALEXANDER, 1818-96.—Memoir of Daniel Macmillan. By Thomas Hughes. With Portrait. Crown 8vo, London, 1882.

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MACMILLAN, SIR FREDERICK.—*See under Net Book Agreement.*

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A Brief Account of the University Press at Oxford. With Illustrations. Oxford, 1908.

Oxford Books. A Bibliography of Printed Works relating to the University and City of Oxford, or printed and published there. Vols. 1 and 2, 1895-1912.

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MARE, RICHARD DE LA.—*See under Dent Memorial Lectures.*

MARSTON, EDWARD, 1824-1914.

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- Includes the productions of the Bannatyne, Maitland and Roxburghe Clubs, and the chief private presses of the day. Martin was a London bookseller, but retired from business in 1826 and ten years later became librarian to the Duke of Bedford.*
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The title of the work is obtained from the Greek *Areopagus*, or *Mars Hill*, a mount near Athens, where the most famous court of justice of antiquity held its sittings. 'Milton was seeking', wrote Professor Henry Morley, 'to persuade the High Court of Parliament, our *Areopagus*, to reform itself by revoking a tyrannical decree against the liberty of the press.' Macaulay described it as 'that sublime treatise which every statesman should wear as a sign upon his hand and as frontlets between his eyes.'

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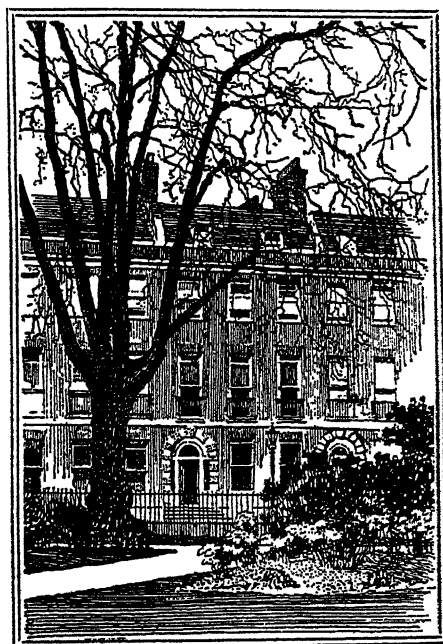
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